■ Business / B1
Peso slides past 56:$1; stocks slump

■ World / A12
Red Cross told prisoner abuse in Iraq 'part of process'

■ News / A8
5 suspects in Boracay murders released for lack of evidence

■ Across / A17
Pacificador takes lead over Antique rivals

Tuesday night / Bagani / A11
Exit poll, exit poll, paano ka ginawa?

Stars bright, stars dim in electoral show

By Marissa R. Cruz
and Jocelyn Vidis, Court Scene

STAR POW: All Souls' Day Sunday weather came off a second try in an empty Cuyo City in Batangas province.

"We'll know the exact figures by tonight," Santos yesterday told the hacienda in a television interview. "We're happy that the election

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Namfrel 'quick count' moving at snail's pace

By C. D. Bolasa
and Philip C. Tubeza

FPJ angry; GMA glows

A DOWNCAST Fernando Poe Jr. accuses the administration of widespread cheating and appeals to the media to tell the truth.

Actor cries fraud, hits media for 'trending'

By Carlos Pablo,
Jerome Aning
and Christine O. Avendaño

FERNANDO Poe Jr. and his camp are crying election fraud.

At a press conference yesterday in Greenhills, San Juan, the standard-bearer of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino said he was winning in the counting of the votes but media reports of ongoing quick counts were saying otherwise.

"I would like to [tell] my supporters, volunteers and the 11 [joint people-first in this fight] not with you all the way. Kayo lang ho, gusto ko lang sputtion, si Al. Isinapo nanggaling kasi kayo nang mga kumukuha sa media for 'trending'," the 64-year-old movie idol said.

The press conference, held in a building on Wilson Street, was over in two minutes. He took no questions.

A 100 "victory march" assembled at 7:30 last night on a stretch of Ayala avenue in Makati City, near the site where Poe held his rousing welcome last June for supporters.

Transcorp says the Makati bank's nine clinics are about 1,000 sq m a lot pressured from the midtown and police secured to contain 100 protesters gathering at the corner of Ayala avenue and Bruce de-

VICTORY lungs (many through the Palace corridors as a delighted President Macapagal calls a press conference and hosts lunch for the Philstar.ning press corps.

Macapagal basks in 'moment of glory,' talks of convening Con-Con

By Jules Lobog Jurnilese
and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE AIR of victory hung in the air, but she was careful to keep her reelection in check.

In her first public appearance a day after the elections, and with unofficial results and vote polls showing she was leading over actor Fernando Poe Jr., President Macapagal-Arroyo looked in what she described as a "moment of universal glory" for the Philippines, and stressed the need for unity and peace.

"The feelings of one person, most of all me, are not important," she said. "Peace and unity—God's the most important."

At a thanksgiving lunch she hosted for Palace reporters, Ms Macapagal talked about uniting the country, and submitting to the next Congress a resolution to amend certain provisions of the Constitution governing economic activities.

She said she prayed to the Lord that the 16-of (no election) controls did not happen," she said.

Ms Macapagal was condensing a statement by the Catholic

concentrated, a si

Bloodiest elections in 2 decades

By Alexis Pope
and Christian V. Esguerra

IT WAS the country's bloodiest election campaign in over two decades and there was no sign of a let up on the bloodletting.

The Armed Forces and the national police mounted an high alert yesterday, saying the volatile phase of Monday's polls was just beginning with the start of the canvass of votes around the country.

"The counting and the canvassing are critical," Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, spokesperson for the Philippine National Police, told reporters. "We're not stating that those will be violence, but violence can develop anytime."

The latest figures from the Armed Forces showed a total of 117 people had died in election-related incidents all over the country since the campaign season started last Dec. 15.

[illegible]

BY CANDLELIGHT the trading and tallying of votes continues at the Camp Crame Police Multipurpose Center yesterday. Some 52 canvassers nationwide are gathered for "brownouts" on Election Day.

Noli, Loren both claim poll victory

By Carlos Pablo,
Juliet Labog-Jurnilese
and Jo Clemente
PhilStar Central Luzon Bureau

"THE PEOPLE have spoken," the top three vice presidential contenders agreed, but when the people said, they heard three different ways.

They were one in voice there on vice president of the Philippines," Sen. Loren Legarda of Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino said in a statement issued yesterday, just a day after the national elections.

In his own statement, administration standard-bearer Sen. Noli de Castro said, "I believe I will get a clear and convincing [sic] margin against my opponents."

Saying the coveted position is a toss-up between Legarda and De Castro is his formulation. Sen. Aquino-Oreta said: "We have accomplished what we set out to do. We urge respect [for] people's decision."

The counting is far from over, of course. Even so, Legarda's statement referred to "victory to the nation."

She noted that unofficial and real results indicated that she was bound for a "very wide lead"

SWS exit poll says GMA defeating Poe by 9 points

IT'S ALL over save for the counting of votes if results of the exit poll conducted by a private polling group are to be believed.

President Macapagal-Arroyo got 41 percent of the votes cast on May 10, while actor Fernando Poe Jr. received 32 percent of the votes, the Social Weather Stations reported yesterday morning on ABS-CBN's "TV Patrol."

It was ABS-CBN that sponsored the poll in which 1985 interviewed 1,627 respondents on doorsteps of their residences a day after their cast their votes.

Ms Macapagal's re-running mate was also ahead in the two presidential race, said SWS president Mahar Mangahas. She's first cousin.

Sen. Bob de Castro had 47 percent of the votes and Sen. Loren Legarda, running mate of Poe, had 39 percent. Senator Aquino got 3 percent. Sen. results of exit poll for senators on Page 20

In the presidential race, Sen. Panfilo Lacson came in third with 9 percent. Former Sen. Raul Roco and Rep. Eddie Villanueva both had 5 percent. Eight percent of the respondents gave no answer.

With a margin of error of plus or minus 1.5 percentage points, the exit poll gave the Macapagal a lead of 7.5 percentage points over Poe.

In the gubernatorial race, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile was leading over Rep. Edgardo Espinosa of Laguna, 51 percent to 35.46 percent, or 35.46 million. The Commission on Elections earlier said that 43.74 million registered voters were eligible to vote on May 10.

The President was also leading in the quick count being conducted by the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel).

As of 4 p.m. yesterday, Ms Macapagal had 22,366 votes, followed by Poe with 14,886, Lacson 4,435, Villanueva 1,750, and Roco 1,347.

[illegible]

8 K-4, 4 KNP bets lead in Senate race

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE ADMINISTRATION appeared to have scored big in the midterm race with eight candidates of President Macapagal-Arroyo's K-4 coalition leading or in close a majority of the top 12 positions, according to an exit poll conducted by the Social Weather Stations.

The 1000 poll, conducted at the close of the voting on May 10 and released yesterday showed former Trade Secretary Mar Roxas leading the pack, with 40 percent of the vote, followed by his fellow K-4 candidates Ramon "Bong" Revilla and Pia Cayetano.

The other administration candidates who made it to the "Target 12" were Kintera Embassy Santiago, former Interior secretary Richard Gordon, former Pampanga governor Lito Lapid and reelection on senators Robert Barbers and Rodolfo Biazon.

The three from the opposition Koalisyon ng

ELEKSYON 2004
QUICK COUNT (PARTIAL, UNOFFICIAL)

Candidates	Votes
PRESIDENT	
1 Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria	13,196
2 Poe, Fernando Jr.	10,713
3 Lacson, Panfilo M.	1,435
4 Roco, Raul	1,347
5 Villanueva, Eduardo C.	1,750
VICE PRESIDENT	
1 Legarda, Loren B.	14,886
2 De Castro, Noli	13,196
3 Aquino-Oreta, Teofisto	1,435
4 Tan, Wilfredo V.	1,347
SENATOR	
1 Roxas, Mar-Manuel V.I.	13,196
2 Revilla, Ramon J.	10,713
3 Cayetano, Pia Juliana S.	9,435
4 Pimentel, Aquilino Q. Jr.	10,196
5 Revilla, Jinggoy E.	10,196
6 Ejercito, Joseph E.	10,196
7 Biazon, Rodolfo G.	10,196
8 Barbers, Robert S.	10,196
9 Lapid, Lito M.	10,196
10 Gordon, Richard J.	10,196
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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms mainly restricted over Luzon and Visayas.

Second FRONTPAGE

Polls acceptable, traders say

Comelec calls for vigilance as canvassing starts finally

By Marvin R Marfil

THE CANVASSING of votes started yesterday with an election official reminding the people to stay extra vigilant in this area the part of the election process where duplications, vote padding and cheating were likely to occur.

Election Commissioner Resurreccion Borra said, "We expect the observers of the various [political parties] present to be vigilant in watching the proceedings [and] immediately expose any manipulations."

"As long as there are written reports, we will take the proper steps for investigation, but if these are merely verbal, we will ignore it practically," Borra said.

Following the election process, the ballot boxes and election returns were transported from the polling precincts to the centers where the canvassing are to be held.

Municipal/city certificates of canvass (COC) will be brought to the city and provincial boards of canvassers for submission to the National Board of Canvassers or the Philippine International Convention Center in Manila.

The Commission on Election expects to receive 191 COCs from the cities, 73 from the provinces and the 6 from overseas posts.

Incompetence

Under the law, the canvass on the municipal level should last 36 hours after the close of the polls, while those for the cities and provinces should be completed in 48 hours and 72 hours, respectively.

The National Board of Canvassers will convene at 10:00 a.m. at the PICC to start on all the COCs coming from all the provincial, city and district boards of canvassers," Borra said.

The canvass is expected to end 10 days after canvassing.

Yesterday a group of protesters—including foreigners from a church-based group—demonstrated in front of the Comelec, decrying the incompetence of the electoral body.

Fr. Joe Dizon of Namfrel, a local monitoring group, said their members were able to collect data on the massive disenfranchisement of voters throughout the country.

"There was massive confusion nationwide and because of this, many were disenfranchised. If this was a change, it was an evil change," Dizon said, adding that most of the disenfranchised were seen as "opposition bailiwicks" like the rural Central Luzon and Mindanao.

Asked for proof, Dizon said Namfrel would hold a press conference today where they would reveal what they had called to their fact-finding centers.

Asked to comment, Borra challenged the group to reveal their figures.

Back to Mindanao

"Let's not make wild accusations. That's not fair. We have reports from the field and the turnout was comparatively high. We will be getting the statistical data in the later but right now, we cannot say that 50 percent were disenfranchised," he said.

After rejecting Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano was reassigned to the given 10 and 11 to take over the seven reassigned to Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, who has been taken ill.

Garcillano had been accused by another commissioner Mehol Sadain of "unfair practices" after allegations surfaced that he had participated in previous cases of rigging elections.

Don't spook the market, stockbrokers urge pols

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

BUSINESSMEN yesterday found Monday's election satisfactory albeit less than perfect, as stockbrokers and dealers urged politicians to refrain from doing anything to spook the stock market.

"The elections were not perfect but acceptable," said Ricardo Chan, executive vice president of the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce Inc.

The businessmen said the ongoing canvassing process was more critical in view of the emerging fight over between President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Fernando Poe Jr. They are depending on the independent poll watchdogs and media's parallel counts to provide businessmen in assessing the credibility of the results that they claimed were more important than the winner in maintaining confidence in the country.

On the other hand, the heads of the country's association of exchanges, firms and dealers called on all political parties to maintain an improved opening in business confidence by refraining from partisan politics and destabilization maneuvers that would lower business and investor confidence and economic recovery and development among Filipinos.

The call was made in a press statement issued by Private Exchanges and Broker Agents, chair and president, respectively, of the Philippine Association of Securities Brokers and Dealers Inc. (PASBDI).

They said the business community would be grateful to see the major political parties and leaders respecting the country's democratic process and institutions by awaiting the results of the elections.

"We want just an end to partisan politics and conduct and drive for elections that had marked some sections of the political campaign last month," they said. "Let us respect the democratic process."

'Less turbulence'

Representative Raul T. Concepcion said that despite reports of sporadic shooting, violence, and alleged disenfranchisement of a number of voters, he found the elections to be "orderly and peaceful on the whole" and "less turbulent" than previous political exercises.

But Concepcion warned that the political scene has now moved into an even more critical phase with the counting of the ballots.

He said businessmen were keenly watching the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) quick count and media reports on the canvassing to assess the credibility of the results. Concepcion said that so long as the official tally of the Commission on Elections do not vary too far from the parallel count of Namfrel and media reports like the Inquirer, then the results would be upheld and accepted by the people no matter who wins.

Concepcion is the vice chairman of Rockfield Electronic Area Development.

The Ateneo Policy Center on Governance think-tank, had warned prior to the elections that this election would be more about winning credibly than the election itself.

Credibility

In his May 7 report, Ateneo Policy Center senior fellow Victor Ordoñez said: "An Arroyo win more and more credible with less fraud, does not do away the concerns about the credibility of the count. The more people that count, the better."

Concepcion said that the peso's weakness and Section 8 market's slide yesterday were largely due to movements in the commercial markets rather than a reaction to the initial results of the elections (Related story on Page B1)

Some possible fears soured the markets' sentiments yesterday over the close race between the Broadsides and opposition bet Fernando Poe Jr. based on early returns when the most recent surveys showed the incumbent enjoying a big edge over the movie star.

"I think businessmen are more worried on the credibility of the elections rather than who ends up with the most votes," Concepcion said.

Lacson downplays media quick count

By Norman Bordadora

THE GMMP of presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday downplayed the importance of the media quick count which shows him trailing President Macapagal-Arroyo and movie actor Fernando Poe Jr., saying they represent less than 2 percent of the country's total precincts.

Angelito Banayo, Lacson's spokesperson and political strategist, told the Inquirer it would be better for the electorate to just wait for the results of the quick count being conducted by the National Movement for Free Elections.

"Sadly, (the Namfrel quick count is) also quite slow," Banayo said. "As it stands, we can't comment on results of the media quick count. It's too small a sample to judge what would be the outcome of the elections," he said in a telephone interview.

Banayo said their own quick count shows Lacson getting five while Mr Macapagal is in first third.

Banayo said that Lacson remains hopeful he could pull off a surprise victory despite his dismal showing in the media quick count and in most exit polls.

"He's quite hopeful," Banayo told reporters.

Lacson showed up at his campaign headquarters in Makati City yesterday but shied away from the media.

Banayo said Lacson does not want to comment on the exit polls until he sees the partial results of Namfrel's quick count.

He said that they have mobilized some 5,000 lawyers and law students around the country to guard against cheating, which he said is likely to take place during the canvassing.

"It's at the municipal and provincial canvassing that fraud for national candidates is normally implemented. We have 2,000 lawyers watching the municipal canvassing to ensure we are not cheated," Banayo said.

US exec says polls 'orderly'

Rosa-May P. de Guzman
PGS Mindanao Bureau

PAGADIAN, Magindanao—Despite violent incidents and fraud that marred Monday's elections in the Southern Philippines, a US official, who came to Central Mindanao to observe the conduct of the balloting, said the conduct of the polls in the region was "orderly."

Joseph Sass, assigned with the political affairs division of the United States Embassy in Manila, told the Inquirer that from his observation, there was an "honest and free election" in the region.

Sass was one of the 300 observers the US sent to various areas of the country not only to "observe the conduct of elections but to identify best practices and provide recommendations for changes in future elections."

He visited key Maguindanao and North Cotabato towns on Monday.

"Democracy is very alive in the Philippines. It's very heartening to see people expressing their right of suffrage," he said.

Yesterday, Sass met with poll and military officials in the region and shared with them his observation.

Charito Caller, Central Mindanao Comelec director, said Sass did not mention any problems or security concerns to her.

"He only told me when we met at the headquarters of the Army's 6th Infantry Division (in Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao) that the conduct of elections in the region was orderly," Caller said in a telephone interview.

Caller hoped that Sass' observation would help build national and international confidence in the elections.

Deficit below target—GMA

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AMID charges of wanton use of government funds, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday claimed that her administration has managed to keep its spending within prudent limits in the first four months of the year.

The President told reporters she expects the budget deficit in 4 months before target the cough April this year.

The government's budget deficit in the first quarter this year was below the P68.9 billion target set for the period.

Mr Macapagal's political rivals had alleged that the budget deficit was ballooning due to her abuse of public funds to bankroll her bid for the presidency.

The President was also accused of diverting money from the increased budget to spending programs to boost her election chances such as the issuance of Philhealth cards bearing her image and use of the road mess (as to hire thousands of street sweepers wearing government-issued T-shirts with her initials in bold letters. But the President has maintained that the use of these funds were properly disbursed based on the programs.

The President said the budget gap would be her top priority if she would get a full six-year term in office and that her main solution to this chronic problem was to initiate tax reforms in Congress.

The government aims to keep the budget deficit this year to 39 97.8 billion or 4.2 percent of the Gross Domestic Product. Last year, the government incurred a deficit of P196.9 billion as against its target of P102 billion.

Namfrel 'quick count' moving at snail's pace

(Front page, A1)

Namfrel chair Jose Concepcion said that the "quick count" was delayed after many election officers withheld the sixth copy of election returns that was supposed to go to Namfrel.

Concepcion said the true messaging system for Namfrel also bogged down due to the heavy traffic of text messages that welcomed were sending. Namfrel volunteers nationwide text the election results they gathered at the precinct level.

The latest Namfrel bulletin available as of press time yesterday was the 4 p.m. bulletin. That tally showed results from only 639 precincts or .23 percent of the 110,362 precincts nationwide.

The Namfrel still had no results from the Ilocos, Cagayan and Cordillera regions, Eastern Visayas and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. There were also no results from overseas voters.

Concepcion said the Namfrel count is quicker than the Comelec count because the Namfrel counters do just that—count votes.

"We have had some problems and among the problems we are addressing is texting. We probably underestimated the load of people who are texting and if you are in a province, you have limitations precisely so you have to care. So you have to wait for your turn," he said.

Namfrel volunteers in the thing provinces also had to go to urban areas where there are cell sites to be able to text in the results, according to Concepcion.

But his men, he said, had evaluated remedial measures such as asking volunteers to tabulate the results using the Microsoft Excel program used to send them through the Internet.

Concepcion said that Namfrel officials were counter-checking the tallies being done in the field before these were posted on the big screen at La Salle, Greenhills.

Catch up

Still, Concepcion expressed confidence that Namfrel would be able to catch up to its tabulation in two days and complete its task in seven days.

He said Namfrel 10 minutes before midnight the other day to release its initial tabulation for president, vice president and senatorial candidates.

Among the areas where Namfrel was experiencing difficulties in retrieving the sixth copy of the returns were Ilocos Norte, Rizal, Aurora, Isla de Siala, Basilan, and some areas in Las Piñas and Pasig.

In Ilocos Norte, Concepcion said, Rep. Imee Marcos was asking for the Namfrel copy, prompting Namfrel secretary general Guillermo Luz to file a protest with the Commission on Elections.

Adamantly against

In Jolo where returns from 5,000 precincts were being counted at Notre Dame, the Jolo Public School and the military compound, Namfrel volunteers could not easily connect to collect the copy.

Other workers also returned all the election papers and ballots to return to Jerusalem to be brought back to the municipal hall before giving Namfrel its copy.

"We were adamantly against this because it counts something can happen," Concepcion said.

He called on the election protest lawyers and regional directors to ensure that Namfrel gets its copy.

Concepcion said he had asked Education Undersecretary Chito Gascon to deploy superintendents of private schools the night after the country and to impress upon the teachers the need to give the sixth copy to Namfrel.

Stars bright, stars dim . . .

(From page A1)

result just say superintendent."

Zamora, who is up against three opponents, said she was heading the manual race by 64 to 61 percent.

"I think the biggest plus factor here was the fact that we never lacked out as any rival candidates throughout the campaign," Zamora said. "We simply stuck with a pronouncing our 10-point agenda."

Villanueva's supporters

Villanueva ng Saglabalang Pilipino (SNP) senatorial candidate Ernesto Maceda earlier was reported to have lashed out at Santos, calling her "pandak ng lipat" after she reported a disappearance of the treasurer-it's tally pursuit to the SNP in Batangas.

Mark Lapid, son of senatorial candidate Lito Lapid, was leading in the race for Pampanga governor. Mark and Kiko Aquino had admitted what they were doing.

Mark's father, an action star himself, was governor of Pampanga for three terms. In the senatorial contest, he was in the ninth slot, according to the partial, unofficial results yesterday.

Mark said that despite his opponents in the contest, he now leading, incumbent Representative Juan Pablo Bondoc and Zenaida Duran even let him own election.

"I never thought that the votes in my favor would turn out to be that big," the young Lapid said yesterday. "But the counting is still ongoing. To the incumbent, I'm more voting the morning here at home."

In Cotabato, former action star Rey Malonzo, who has been the city's mayor for three terms and who is running for congressman of the first district of the city, was trailing Jose Mahipton.

Malonzo's alleged manipulation of campaign activities apparently did not help his and his wife's political bid. His wife, Elpi, was for Cotabato mayor.

In Quezon City singer and former Councilor Dingdong Avanzado failed to unseat fellow actor and incumbent Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista.

Several newspapers quoted Bautista as saying he was hurt by Avanzado's decision to run against him.

Former Quezon City Mayor Ismael Mathay joked Avanzado in his running mate after action star Rudy Fernandez withdrew to avoid running against Bautista. Bautista was Fernandez's running mate when the latter ran for mayor in the May 2001 election. Fernandez lost while Bautista won the post of the mayor.

Still in Quezon City, reelection ist Councilor Aiko Melendez of the second district was trailing Winston Castelo.

The actress broke up with husband Jomari Yllana and last year was engaged in a vicious word war with Yllana's current girlfriend, actress Ara Mina.

In February, Yllana asked the Quezon City Regional Trial Court to cite Melendez for indirect contempt for preventing him from visiting their son. The case was settled out of court.

Yllana's older brother, Anjo Yllana, apparently is faring better than his former sister-in-law Melendez. The comedian and TV host seemed a winner in the race for vice-mayor in Pasig City.

Former actor Vice Ganda, 31, a candidate for congressman of the second district of Tambunan del Norte, told the Inquirer he was in a neck-and-neck battle with incumbent Rep. Nanette Santiago.

But he added he was still awaiting the election results in Ugong City, where the Commission on Elections had ordered a recount of roughly 600 votes, and Tambunan, where the Comelec had ordered that another voting be held in two weeks.

"The elections here were relatively peaceful," said Ganda. "Except perhaps for the attempt to sabotage my campaign. My security personnel saw a hole in my car's gas tank. It's good they protected me."

In Manila, also showing a winning edge were incumbent Councilor Alex Morrow, who was running second to Manilet accord driver Ruben Ongpin, who placed second in the fifth district; and Ces Asuda, unit also in the fifth district.

Dimming stars

Stars who were not shining as brightly were mayoral candidate Sonny Belmonte, former member of the singing group Freights, who was trailing incumbent Mayor Mariles C. Fernandez in Marikina and former "TGIF" star Gel Sierenberg, who is running for councilor in Pasay City.

Actor and former "That's Entertainment" member Jeanne Alarcon, who is running for vice governor of Rizal province, was still closely watching the counting.

"Kasi ang nagsisi kasi ako bilanggo para sealing nanggaling dyanin," said Alarcon, who ran under Gral Boom party. Alarcon (boladoodle. "Sa ayo lagay with the initial results. Ako, nagtatay-tatay."

Alarcon was a vice councilor of Cainta, Rizal.

Of movie stars who have not been as lucky in their political bids, Alarcon said, "Mahalaga pa rin ang pagiging artista para may tao ang tatanga kung dadaan ka a Sunday Bing kay mawalan ng pag-asa. Showbiz na-mother ako kaya pag sa pag mawalo ako, bumalik ako. Don't feel. Ready ako sa dun people."

If the May 10 elections taught award-winning actor Jay Manalo anything, it is that his place is really in show business. Manalo lost in his bid to be a councilor in Marikina second district.

Manalo said in a text message to his handler, Elaine Sarmiento, "It's me, I lost pero lif'ang."

"But he's not closing his door to running again for public office," Sarmiento said. "He said that he'd know what to do next time."

Former stage actor and comedian Lou Veloso had been elected councilor of Manila's sixth district three times. This time, he was running for Congress and apparently still not makers.

He was third among four contenders as of yesterday. "Mga dalubhasa ang sinasabi pilipit yung mga nagbigay ng pamamalitang pinanood, ng pamamalitang pinanood," he said. "But I have no regrets. I gave my best."

As in the past three elections, Veloso is staying in a monastery in Malaybalay, Bukidnon, and will be back in Manila on Sunday. He plans to be active again in show business.

Pasig mayor Vicente Eusebio Jr. Mayor Jose Sapurro has apparently lowered his losses.

Late year, he engaged TV host Bela Padilla in a drawn-out and very public feud after the lovers broke up. This time, he knew when to give up and conceded. Eusebio is former National Security Adviser Ruby Gaba in the race for congressman of Pamahapan's second district, early Tuesday morning.

Sharjaet's former wife of 11 years, actress Dina Bonnevie, was not as ready to accept defeat in the Pamahapan contest for mayor, a position that her ex-husband had occupied for nine years. As of yesterday, the independent and first-time candidate Bonnie was tagged third to front-runner Pablo Cillesen.

Sharjaet supported Cillesen's candidacy.

In other parts of the country, other candidates from show business fared far better than Bonnie and Morrow.

BOY CABRIDO

VOLUNTEERS man Namfrel phones at its Quick Count headquarters at La Salle Greenhills, San Juan.

Bloodiest ...

From page A1

In the 2001 elections, 111 died in political violence, the military said. Eighty-seven were killed in the 1998 presidential polls, 83 in the 1995 elections and 56 in 1992.

Marcos years

The death toll in this year's campaign even surpassed the number of people killed during the snap elections held in 1986 during the tumultuous last weeks of Ferdinand Marcos' dictatorship.

INQUIRER records showed 93 people were killed in the 1986 campaign.

The military has recorded 153 poll-related incidents this year compared to 221 in 2001 and 295 in 1998.

"There are fewer incidents this year but apparently these incidents are deadlier," AFP Public Information Office chief Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero told the INQUIRER.

Most of the violence this year has been blamed on private armed groups employed by local politicians. These groups allegedly included communist guerrillas hired to protect some politicians in Masbate, the military said.

Senior military and election officials had earlier described Monday's elections as "relatively peaceful."

AFP warns against violence

The military warned against violence or massive protests linked to the elections and said it would use "necessary force" to maintain order if losing parties tried to stir up trouble.

The 113,000-strong military remains on high alert and "will not hesitate to implement its plan and employ the necessary force to maintain tranquility and order, particularly in Metropolitan Manila," the Associated Press quoted Lucero as saying.

A military unit is on standby in Metro Manila to counter any attempt to organize huge protests and troops have secured power lines to prevent outages that could disrupt vote-counting, Lucero said.

Mistaken identity

In the latest incident, a policeman was shot and wounded yesterday in an apparent case of mistaken identity in Tubao, La Union.

The shooting caused panic among government employees, election officials and residents at the town hall, where the canvass of votes was taking place.

Police said PO2 Fredelito Mabalot, an aide of Mayor Violeta Verceles, was shot in the abdomen after soldiers mistook him for an armed civilian.

The latest Camp Aguinaldo death tally included three more people killed on election day.

Ballots protected

Two militiamen died while a teacher and a soldier were wounded when communist rebels attempted to snatch a ballot box in a hinterland village of Kabasalan, Zamboanga Sibugay, the military said.

The unnamed teacher and the escorts were walking toward the town center carrying the ballot box when the rebels fired on them.

"Our men managed to protect the ballot box but two of them died," said Maj. Gen. Trifonio Salazar, commander of the Army's 1st Infantry Division.

In Matnog, Sorsogon, a soldier was killed when a boat carrying a military team and poll officials was fired upon by suspected communist rebels.

The rebels retreated after a brief firefight and the ballots were secured, the military said.

Reserves called to duty

In Barcelona town, a policeman guarding a precinct was accidentally killed when he slipped and his gun went off, the bullet hitting him in the head, police said.

Goltiao said reserve officers in all provinces and regions would be activated to assist election officers until the last ballot was counted.

Each region has a reserve equivalent to a battalion—about 400 to 500 men—while provinces each have a company of about 90 men.

The reserves will back the regular police and military contingent in securing the transfer of ballot boxes and the areas where votes are canvassed, Goltiao said.

"We need to see to it that all votes will be counted," he said.

The PNP said it was particularly wary of rival candidates' supporters who usually trigger the violence.

Goltiao said politicians themselves could help prevent violence by entering into peace covenants with one another.

Sportsmanship would be a big help, he said.

"The good thing to do is to concede if a candidate has lost already," Goltiao said. "The elections were peaceful and credible so there's no reason for losing candidates not to concede."

Goltiao said Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez's act of conceding defeat to the former National Security Adviser Roilo Golez before the vote count was finished was the act of a "true gentleman."

5 cops face ax

Five more police officers are facing relief for their alleged involvement in partisan political activities.

Chief Insp. Danilo Lubaton, SPO2 Florencio Ramos, SPO1 Alfredo Benito, PO2 Luisito Animas and SPO1 Mario Quiambao are alleged to have supported Antipolo's reelectionist Mayor Angelito Gatlabayan.

PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. earlier announced the relief of two police colonels for a similar violation. He did not specify how the colonels engaged in partisanship.

Lubaton and company, along with Sgt. Edgar Villanueva and nine civilians, were caught with high-powered firearms on Sumulong Highway in Antipolo on Monday afternoon.

The rest of the suspects were identified as Dioscarro Palagani, Hermenigildo Trecenio, Wilson Ocampo, Marinao Ponce, Jonathan Alcantara, Pablito Beltran, Ben Parado, Sandy Sabanal, and Abraham Samson.

The group was on board three vehicles when they were flagged down by the city police and the provincial mobile group.

Seized from the suspects were two M-16 rifles, four .45 cal. pistols, two .38 cal. revolvers and ammunition.

Stern order

All 15 suspects were charged with violating the election gun ban.

Goltiao expressed doubt that the five policemen facing relief would actually be punished for purportedly making their services available to a candidate.

Ebdane, himself accused of being a President Macapagal-Arroyo loyalist, has issued a stern order to his men to arrest all policemen engaging in partisan politics.

"It's very hard to file a case of partisanship," Goltiao said, explaining that officers should be caught distributing campaign materials for a candidate or threatening supporters of a rival politician.

Goltiao said police were still investigating if Lubaton and the four policemen had any official business to be with the other heavily armed men. ***With reports from Gia Damaso-Dumo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Marlon Ramos, Joyce Mejillano, Michael Jaucian and Niño Jesus Orbeta, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Jeffrey M. Tupas, Rosa-May V. de Guzman, Rex G. Ortega, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Japanese immigration guard, Pinay sentenced for fake marriage

TOKYO—A former Japanese immigration bureau security guard and his Philippine girlfriend were given suspended three-year prison terms on Monday for faking a marriage intended to help China-born Kim Jong-nam avoid deportation.

The Tokyo District Court handed down three-year jail terms suspended for five years each to Hitoshi Iwaki, 28, and a 40-year-old female Philippine-born mother for falsifying public documents and meeting an immigration violation (Iwaki), a guard for the Tokyo Immigration Bureau, was dating the woman in March 2003, when her visa was set...

They then lived together for a year in his apartment in Tochigi prefecture, some 250 kilometers (150 miles) north of Tokyo, and later registered a marriage certificate to complete [illegible] documents to support the woman's application for permanent residency in Japan.

Kim, who was identified only by the Japanese rendering of his name as Jo Hitoyasu, Shukan Shincho, revealed he had obtained and then deported. AFP

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PNP says Reds netted only ₱10M in campaign fees

By Christian Esguerra

FOR ALL their threats and show of force, the communist New People's Army managed a measly ₱10 million in extortion money from local candidates—but it got more than a total of ₱39,018,000.

The single biggest amount collected was in the Caraga region in Eastern Mindanao, an NPA-infested area where the communists got ₱5,850,000, according to the PNP report.

Politicians in Bicol, another perennial NPA stronghold, and in the Cordillera region in Northern Luzon paid up a combined total of ₱3.6 million.

Candidates in the Ilocos, Cordillera, Central Luzon, Mimaropa and Western Visayas shelled out a combined ₱1,365,000, the PNP said.

The police said the rebels' mother organization also collected campaign fees from candidates in Central Visayas, the Zamboanga peninsula and Northern Mindanao. But it received logistics support in the form of communication boosters, Admm in Northern Mindanao, the PNP said.

Aside from money, the rebels also received campaign contributions in the form of guns and other goods.

They reportedly got at least 33 M-16 rifles, three pistols, 20 pieces of communication equipment, two computers, 41 sacks of rice and canned goods in the Ilocos, Cagayan, Cordillera, Central Luzon, Calabarzon and Eastern Visayas.

Drilon said most of the candidates who bowed to NPA pressure were running for local positions. But he did not discount the possibility that some senatorial candidates may have paid PTC fees to be able to campaign in NPA-infested areas.

Show of force

The authorities saw the attacks to a [illegible] "show of force," considering the NPA's purportedly declining membership.

Former top NPA leaders estimated its membership at just between 5,000 and 6,000 today, according to Drilon.

This, though, the communist guerrillas barely made good on their promise to make a bonfire in PTC fees this campaign period.

As of May 6, the rebels had demanded a total of ₱6,910,000

SAN MIGUEL CASE

Gov't going for Danding's 20%

GOVERNMENT prosecutors said they are optimistic that the government may eventually get control of the 20 percent block of San Miguel Corp. shares still being held by SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

According to Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio, "We won the sentiment of Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo who, while still solicitor general, facilitated the strategy to secure the return of the remaining 27 percent SMC shares to the government."

"We at OSP [Office of the Special Prosecutor] are still optimistic that we will get 100 percent SMC shares to avoid," said Villa-Ignacio, who said he had a talk with Marcelo only yesterday. The Ombudsman is not known to give media interviews.

"We feels very proud about what they achieved. His strategy was proven correct with the issuance of the recent sandiganbayan's judgment," Villa-Ignacio said.

Last Friday, the Sandiganbayan issued a partial summary judgment of the 17-year litigation over the criminal love bonds, awarding the disputed 27 percent block of SMC shares to the government in lieu of monetary damages.

The shares were part of a 47 percent block of SMC shares that the Presidential Commission on Good Government acquired in 1986, claiming that they had been acquired with funds from the coco levy imposed by the Marcos dictatorship and illegally transferred by Cojuangco and other Marcos cronies.

The decision, however, did not cover the 20 percent block of shares still held by Cojuangco or other controls the 15-year SMC board.

But PCGG has been battling Cojuangco in the Sandiganbayan for the past 17 years in at least eight cases involving the shares in SMC and various businesses allegedly acquired using the coco funds.

Earlier, PCGG head Reuben Varon said the commission would be "giving the same arguments that were last Friday's Sandiganbayan decision is going after the 20 percent block of shares. — Armand Nocum

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, May 12, 2004
5th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 15: 1-6
Gospel: Jn 15: 1-8

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine and my Father is the vinegrower. If any of my branes does not bear fruit, he breaks it off, and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, that it may bear even more fruit.

"You are already made clean by the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me as I remain in you. The branch cannot bear fruit by itself but must remain part of the vine; so neither can you if you don't remain in me.

"I am the vine and you are the branches. As long as you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit, but apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not remain in me is thrown away as one does with branches and they wither. They are gathered and thrown into the fire and burned.

"If you remain in me and my words in you, you may ask whatever you want and it will be given to you. My Father is glorified when you bear much fruit; it is then that you become my disciples."

Commentary

How many sons for the benefit of its members, as Mother Speaker believed, or the members for the benefit of owners? If you say the first, you seem to be setting the stage for communitarianism, but if you say the second are you not sponsoring fascism? So which is it going to be?

It's questions like these that guarantee that profitably what could not readily pay, and what answers can be true at times. This assignment may have something to do with such school-ing. But there are no false questions, and the question above is surely false. It is like asking whether your hand is for the benefit of your body, or your body for the benefit of your hand. It is flatly nonsense asserting anything to do the benefit of everything else. The question assumes a false separation.

St. Paul said Jesus is the head of the body, the Church. As a rule head, are the bodily members (or not?) still the various be divided from the head and exists only for it? But are members separated from the body remain alive. Although body is an organism, not a collection of parts. We have to be careful about the images we use to describe the Church. False separations inspire schism. The image in today's readings is even more striking than Paul's: a vine and its branches. Unlike a tree, where you can distinguish clearly between trunk and branch, as the vine is just all branches. If you the vine and you are the branches" the vine is the branches.

(Carmen Publications Inc., 2 Alcantara St., UP Sta. Mesa, Quezon City, CP 099, Mm. Metro, 920 Roberts Ave., St., 703-2004, Fax: 921-7929, e-mail: carmen@pacific.net.ph, http://www.carmen.org/Glossary in the Philippines)

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Volunteerism impresses Afghan election observers

BEST OF EUROPE
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By Philip C. Tubeza

A TEAM of election observers flew in from war-torn Afghanistan to watch and learn from last Monday's elections.

The 14 members, representatives of different civil society groups in their country were ushered at the large number of volunteer poll watchers and the cross-legged turnout of women who voted.

Afghanistan will have its first election in September after almost 30 years of civil war, foreign occupation and dictatorship.

Mohammad Ishaki Nabi, a member of the team, said they learned on sight the lessons they're learned in their own elections in September.

"Doing here is helpful for us. We will try our best in our own [elections]," he said. "We should also have an independent poll watching so our elections are clean."

Ramzia, the team visited the National Citizen's Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) quick count center in Sofitel Garden and some hotels for observations.

On Monday they visited a poll precinct in San Juan and were impressed by the "orderly" elections.

"I like your electoral system. It's very organized," said Mohammad Kabuli, another team member.

"There were plenty of volunteer workers. It shows the [high level of] interest of the people," said Kabuli's colleague Mr Amanuddin.

Kabuli hopes his own countrymen would volunteer to become poll watchers in their election. He observed, "The majority of voters in the San Juan precinct were women. That is very interesting for me."

Afghan women have equal rights with men and they can vote, Kabuli added, but the Taliban demonstrators have opposed the registration of female voters.

"I learned a lot from Philippine women. They are very brave at work. I hope our people will work like this," Asia Sheikha Bismaand, 23, a female team member.

She was impressed that most of the poll officials were female school teachers.

Higher female voters are just starting to get to know their rights after years of oppression under the Taliban, an Islamic fundamentalist group that ruled the country until the American overthrow them.

For Bismaand and female friends her age, it will be their first time to vote in September. "We're very excited," she said. "[Philippine] elections are fair and free. We also want free and fair elections in Afghanistan."

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5 suspects in Boracay slays freed

By Christian Esguerra

THE fifth prime suspects in the grisly Boracay murders have been released for lack of sufficient evidence, police said yesterday.

Supt. Renato Ladrazan Cainoy, chief of the Boracay Special Prosecution Unit, said said he had to release the suspects to comply with the 48-hour prescription for the detention of crime suspects. Keeping them beyond that period would get police into trouble.

Investigators had apparently yet to gather sufficient evidence on the murder charges against the five who all used to work for their resort. Businessman Amina Rajamohamed.

The 40-year-old Rajamohamed, and his friends—twin Bhanchet Srikaew and former John Cooperchenah—and the maid Irma Samson, to were all found dead with multiple stab wounds in the morning of May 2.

Cainoy said the five suspects were placed under the custody of Boracay officials so they could be made available in case investigators have to find up the case against them.

"We are innocent. Only God knows," he told the lawyers in a phone interview. "We're just getting more evidence. We want to make sure that the case that we will be filing against them will be solid."

The five laborers became the prime suspects after they gave conflicting statements during questioning, said Supt. Orlando Rita, senior, Aklan provincial police chief.

Magistrate said investigators also got hold of a key witness who claimed she saw the suspects leaving the room of Rajamohamed's three-story mansion in Sitio Balabag hours before the murder was discovered.

The suspects remains under police custody.

Police initially arrested for questioning a total of 20 men hours after the murder. All of them had been tagged by the German victim to work on a construction at his thriving property.

Rajamohamed was then expanding the villa to accommodate more guests.

Bro. Eddie only 3rd in own quick count

By Blancha S. Rivera

[illegible] as the early quick count operation by a political party showing its own candidates lagging behind.

The Bangon Pilipinas party of presidential candidate Bro. Eddie Villanueva started its own quick count yesterday and as of 3 p.m. showed Arroyo leading Panfilo Lacson, with Filipino standard bearer Fernando Poe Jr. heading the presidential race.

Villanueva was often placed third or fourth in his party's tally count.

However, Bangon campaign operations officer Dong Gano said that the results of any quick count, whether its own or the ones being done by certain information technology schools and television networks, did not influence the winner in the election.

Only about eight percent of all returns from the precincts have been included in the unofficial quick counts, he said.

"It is too early to say if there is a trend. So for us, we will do our best to ensure that our votes are counted because many boards of election inspectors do not know that an "Unlad" vote should be counted for Bro. Eddie Villanueva," Dong Gano said in a phone interview.

FPJ angry; GMA glows

Front page 1

Reina

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay immediately confronted officers on the protocol and demanded that they pull back as their partisans were only agitating the pretenders.

By 4 p.m. KNP senatorial candidates Juan Ponce Enrile, Rene Saguisag and Serafin Cuevas had addressed the crowd.

KNP senatorial candidate Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. also arrived before 5 p.m., said the presence of the military was an "overkill."

One rally organizer jokingly said reporters "Welcome to Ayala [.]."

Sen. Nicanor Soriano III said that at around 7 p.m. Poe wanted to go to Ayala and "be with the people" when the opposition camp learned that the crystal ball misfired.

But Enrile and KNP leaders discouraged Poe from doing so because his presence there might be misconstrued as instigating a people-power rally.

Some said there will be other victories that the KNP will hold after election results show that the KNP had won in overseas votes.

The rally was still going on as of 10 p.m.

Binay said the KNP did not count on the march to be "successful or not as people are invisible to the counter or are resisting, contrary to the wording of the EMC." He was referring to the Social Weather Stations, which conducted an exit poll that was broadcast by network.

Sen. Edgardo Angara said the victory march was held in Makati because all KNP candidates, "from presidents down to the councilors," went to the rally.

Another in the day the KNP said there was no way for Poe to lose the presidential race.

"We denounce the trending process of Mahandang to prepare the minds of the public to those very results it will," Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto III said.

Mamaguad-Amoyo has won," KNP spokesperson Mike Rama could not be reached.

Rumors said Mahandang was taking such a move as "they can [still] do cheating that they are doing now."

Asked if, by claiming victory, the KNP was no longer waiting for the results of the Commission on Elections count, Reyes said: "We just want to let the people know that FPJ is leading, and they shouldn't be swayed by Mahandang's trending process."

Troop deployment

Some 400 more troops were deployed in the Bikol region early last night in anticipation of the KNP victory march.

Brig. Gen. Alberto Braganza, chief of the Armed Forces' Southern Luzon Command, told reporters that the deployment was "for monitoring purposes only."

But PNP Command spokesperson Maj. Erwin Rommel Lumiwes said the response that they had coordinated with the Philippine National Police to secure the Makati area during the victory rally.

"In case the [Southern Police District] will find it difficult to control the crowd, we will be there to support our anti-riot troops," he said.

4-percent lead

According to the completed results of a nationwide exit poll released yesterday by the Pulse Asia research and consultancy firm, Poe is retaining a commanding 4-percentage lead over Mr. Mamaguad.

Pulse Asia research director Ana Tabunda-Liwanag said in a press conference at the National Press Club in Manila that 38 percent of 4,468 respondents interviewed on Monday morning voted for Poe, 34 percent for Mr. Mamaguad, 13 percent for Sen. Panfilo Lacson, 10 percent for Raul Roco, and 3 percent for Eddie Villanueva.

The Pulse Asia exit poll was commissioned by the Christian Democratic Organization, a Catholic-inclined lay organization allied with the Coalition for Honest, Orderly and Peaceful Elections (COMPEL).

It had a margin of error of 1.8 percent and was conducted by Pulse Asia's interviewers on Monday from 8 a.m. to 12 noon where, Tabunda said, citing historical data, 75 percent of voters were supposed to have cast their ballots.

Meanwhile, the tabulation of votes and the Comelec projection that 60-65 percent of the country's 35.96 million voters were able to cast their ballots on Monday, Poe's lead over Mr. Mamaguad would be a little over 1.35 million.

'Para sa bayan'

The told reporters that the Mamaguad administration's illegal canvassing out of overseas votes' success and intimidation tactics to ensure her victory meant nothing because he had made the decision to run for president in the national interest.

"Sa pakiwari ko, ikaw ay isang dambuhala sa pamahalaan at pananalapi at kapuri-puri ang iyong mga ginawa para sa bayan," he said.

He dismissed government claims of a high voter turnout, stating many voters were disenfranchised.

Poe urged his followers to maintain their vigilance during the counting and canvassing of votes.

He called on media outfits to be fair and nonpartisan in reporting the results of the elections "Mindanao noong nakaraan, media mga taga-Luzon ang kanilang mga kaibigan. Ito media, para sa bayan natin, once and for all, dalhan niyo pa ang katotohanan."

Poe supporters accused the Mamaguad administration of rigging the May 10 elections and cited a litany of alleged abuses, including rampant vote-buying and deliberate power blackouts aimed at sowing confusion in the counting.

"The widespread irregularities would have cast doubt on the validity of the election results in many areas of the country," said a KNP statement.

The KNP estimates that up to three million votes may have been prevented from casting their ballots.

It said that was the result of, among others, the government's alleged manipulation of voters' lists, Iller regrouping certain areas and juggling the designation of voters in polling precincts.

8 of 16 regions

In the Pulse exit poll, Poe won in eight of the 16 regions nationwide, and Mr. Mamaguad, seven regions. They both lost in the Bicol region, Roco's bailiwick.

Poe won in four of six regions in Luzon (the NCR, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon and Southern Luzon) and Mr. Mamaguad, in the Central and Western Visayas.

They each won in three regions in Mindanao—Poe in Regions 9 and 11 and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao; and Mr. Mamaguad in Regions 10 and 12 and the Caraga Region, where the gap (by 50 and 50 percent) compared to Poe's 29, 28 and 27 percent.

Pulse Asia projected Poe to win in the so-called "Litigation to Luzvim Corridor," or the Middle Luzon area comprising nine rich areas such as Metro Manila, Pangasinan province and Southern Tagalog.

But it said Mr. Mamaguad would most probably win in Cavite, Rizal, Batangas, Quezon and Laguna provinces, where the gap (40 percent of the vote compared to Poe's 29 percent.

However, in the Bicol and Eastern Visayas regions where Poe was leading in the survey, he won over Mr. Mamaguad by a mere 1 and 4 percent, respectively. He was a poor third in the Cordillera and Bicol regions.

Methodology

Survey said multi-stage area probability sampling was used, wherein all regional areas were sampled and most of the big provinces in each region were included.

Small provinces where the tally would not matter much were deliberately excluded to save the timeline for the final report, he said.

Most of the respondents were interviewed as they left the voting centers, and the rest, in their homes.

Survey said the interviewers were stationed in cities or municipal capitals where precincts with the biggest number of voters were supposed to be concentrated.

The results were tabulated on the spot and transmitted by phone, e-mail, fax and text messaging to Pulse's central tabulating center in Quezon City.

At the press conference, the exchange between reporters and lawyers and two senior researchers who presented the results predated the following information:

• The interviewers were mostly conducted in cities and capital towns of provinces. Pulse's lead assumed that the voting populations of the cities or the capital of a province was greater than that of all the rest of the towns of the same provinces put together.

• The interviewers cautiously advised the respondents but, deliberately did not survey those who said they did not vote by any presidential candidate. But some of those interviewed who did not vote for vice president were included.

• There was no indication in the interviewers on what specific time they should conduct the exit poll. But it said that while the survey was supposed to begin at 8 a.m., most of the interviewers actually did so at 11 a.m.

VP candidates

Pulse said that among the vice presidential candidates, Legarda had 31 percent; Sen. Noli S. de Castro, 16 percent; Sen. Loren Legarda, 2 percent; and Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, 1 percent.

In the senatorial race, the so-called "Magic 12" were Mar Roxas, Bong Revilla, Juan Ponce Enrile, Alfredo Lim, Jinggoy Estrada, Gov. Lito Lapid, Sen. Ado Siguion-Reyna, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay, Francisco Tatad, Sen. Rene Saguisag, Jamby Madrigal, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon and Ernesto Maceda.

Trailing in 13th to 16th places were Rolland Gordon, Benja Aquino, Ernesto Herrera, Robert Jaworski and Marcelo Bellosillo Santiago.

'Desaparecido'

KNP senatorial candidate Ramon Revilla said she was among the desaparecidos (disappeared) because her name disappeared from the voters' list in the Bagong Lipunan district of Cubao in Quezon City.

"I'm a desaparecido," Revilla said in mid-afternoon at the Makati Coliseum, site of the KNP's own quick count of votes ("Desaparecido" is the term used for political dissenters who have been abducted by state agents and have not been seen since.)

"I couldn't believe it. I'm a congressional candidate," Revilla said, adding that she had been voting in the district since 1998. But she said her son Bradley was able to vote there.

Revilla said her name also disappeared from the quick count by GMA-7 and ABS-CBN computer school.

She said her lawyers made representations with the TV networks and the situation was rectified late Monday night. But she said GMA-7 offered neither explanation nor apology. With a report from Alexis Pope

FOREIGN observers would be floored at the sight of election officials cut off from tallying up votes in Comelec, Bonifacio Drive.

Macapagal basks in 'glory,' talks of convening Con-Con

Front page 1

chairmanship group El Shaddai that its "servant leader" Bro. Mike Velarde and she had agreed that a constitutional convention must be convened "immediately after the May elections."

"Now with a solid mandate, a constitutional convention is more viable," she said.

Hinting at upon-this business with accented by people carriage and a necklace, a smiling Presidential said a statement congratulating "the entire nation now politically powerful, orderly and clean elections. Together, we have proven to the world that our Democracy is all conveys of the republic and the world. Everyone must be vigilant until the last vote is counted and the last canvass is done."

'Political risks'

She then called on local businessmen to respect the decision of their constituents. "Everyone must now conduct themselves with personal sobriety and respect for the democratic process. This is a moment of national glory that we must cherish and preserve," she said.

Analysts said either a narrow victory or a landslide would present political risks, with a huge win not seen as credible.

"If the margin of victory for Gloria Macapagal Arroyo is very small, then there will be a challenge from the opposition and she will be constrained to rule in a more subdued manner," said Sonny Barrientos, managing director of Manila-based risk consultancy Stratfor Strategies & Investments.

Barrientos spoke this morning at a forum sponsored by the Makati Business Club.

But presidential campaign spokesperson Michael Defensor, who said Mr. Macapagal would end up with a lead of 1 million votes or more, said the opposition should stop claiming that the administration rigged the election results.

While it might be true that a number of voters were not able to vote, he said Mr. Macapagal's supporters were also affected by these unfortunate lapses. Defensor also noted that most of the complainers of cheating were mainly concentrated on watching round times for local posts.

Call for vigilance

Asked about how the government would dispel the tension as the votes were still being counted, Mr. Macapagal said security measures have been reached. "until well" and would stay in place.

"As for information, this is a Commission on Elections duty, so all information must come from the Comelec. It's not, it is supposing the soldiers, the police, the teachers. The national government is outside of that," she said.

Mr. Macapagal also said he urging Barrientos to be vigilant and not let the election "be the victim to succeed, they only have to succeed once. But for us to be successful, we have to be successful in keeping the terrorists away all the time."

Asked to comment on the unofficial results showing her leading over Sen. Fernando said: "The most important thing now is to keep behind the tallies that unfortunately characterized the campaign. I really say here and I think I succeeded to keep my own campaign on the level of a mess and platform, but end to end, it wasn't like that all around. We should also continue to be vigilant for possible and credible elections."

'Something important'

During lunch, the President exchanged to receive reports on election results in the country and abroad. She hardly touched her food.

But she hinted that she discussed something important with her friend and senior Sen. Panfilo Lacson during the "Unity Meal" held at his Ayanta Church on the eve of the elections.

"I would not say they are initial talks (with Lacson) but I expressed that," she said.

Lacson had been the President's biggest then during her past three years in office, after he accused her and her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo of stashing away campaign contributions in secret accounts.

Mr. Macapagal was originally scheduled to resume her water distribution project yesterday in Batangas, but the event was canceled. "I decided to give myself a day off," she said.

Senior Armys presidential chief of staff Jesus Velasco also initiated the round in the Palace yesterday, and Mr. Macapagal, seven regions. They both lost in the Bicol region, Roco's bailiwick.

Poe won in four of six regions in Luzon (the NCR, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon and Southern Luzon) and Mr. Mamaguad, in the Central and Western Visayas.

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Small provinces where the tally would not matter much were deliberately excluded to save the timeline for the final report, he said.

Most of the respondents were interviewed as they left the voting centers, and the rest, in their homes.

Survey said the interviewers were stationed in cities or municipal capitals where precincts with the biggest number of voters were supposed to be concentrated.

The results were tabulated on the spot and transmitted by phone, e-mail, fax and text messaging to Pulse's central tabulating center in Quezon City.

At the press conference, the exchange between reporters and lawyers and two senior researchers who presented the results predated the following information:

• The interviewers were mostly conducted in cities and capital towns of provinces. Pulse's lead assumed that the voting populations of the cities or the capital of a province was greater than that of all the rest of the towns of the same provinces put together.

• The interviewers cautiously advised the respondents but, deliberately did not survey those who said they did not vote by any presidential candidate. But some of those interviewed who did not vote for vice president were included.

• There was no indication in the interviewers on what specific time they should conduct the exit poll. But it said that while the survey was supposed to begin at 8 a.m., most of the interviewers actually did so at 11 a.m.

VP candidates

Pulse said that among the vice presidential candidates, Legarda had 31 percent; Sen. Noli S. de Castro, 16 percent; Sen. Loren Legarda, 2 percent; and Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, 1 percent.

In the senatorial race, the so-called "Magic 12" were Mar Roxas, Bong Revilla, Juan Ponce Enrile, Alfredo Lim, Jinggoy Estrada, Gov. Lito Lapid, Sen. Ado Siguion-Reyna, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay, Francisco Tatad, Sen. Rene Saguisag, Jamby Madrigal, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon and Ernesto Maceda.

Trailing in 13th to 16th places were Rolland Gordon, Benja Aquino, Ernesto Herrera, Robert Jaworski and Marcelo Bellosillo Santiago.

'Desaparecido'

KNP senatorial candidate Ramon Revilla said she was among the desaparecidos (disappeared) because her name disappeared from the voters' list in the Bagong Lipunan district of Cubao in Quezon City.

"I'm a desaparecido," Revilla said in mid-afternoon at the Makati Coliseum, site of the KNP's own quick count of votes ("Desaparecido" is the term used for political dissenters who have been abducted by state agents and have not been seen since.)

"I couldn't believe it. I'm a congressional candidate," Revilla said, adding that she had been voting in the district since 1998. But she said her son Bradley was able to vote there.

Revilla said her name also disappeared from the quick count by GMA-7 and ABS-CBN computer school.

She said her lawyers made representations with the TV networks and the situation was rectified late Monday night. But she said GMA-7 offered neither explanation nor apology. With a report from Alexis Pope

Noli, Loren both claim poll victory

From page A1

over De Castro whom the community hailed victorious during the entire campaign period.

Thanks, guys

"There is no room for any more doubt," Legarda said as she thanked the "millions" who voted for her.

She also expressed her "heartfelt gratitude" to the national and local candidates of the KNP particularly standard bearer Fernando Poe Jr.

She said that her party names all "truly believe that I can make a big difference in the life of our nation. I shall not let them down."

Legarda likewise thanked public schoolteachers, police and military personnel and volunteers from election monitoring organizations for doing their part.

"Let us now join hands and unite so that, with the blessings of The Almighty, the entire nation can finally enjoy the peace and progress that have eluded us for many years," she said.

In the same statement, Legarda warned against quarters that were "bent on subverting the will of the electorate through fraudulent means." She did not say whether she was pointing a finger at the Macapagal administration.

She called for vigilance so as not to allow that the final results of the elections would reflect the voice of the electorate: "We must never allow the enemies of democracy to frustrate and subvert the will of the people, and in the process plunge this nation into yet another period of turmoil, uncertainty and division."

Presidential certainty

In Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo said her piece on the subject in one sentence: "I think Noli will make it."

During a thanksgiving lunch that she hosted for Palace employees who assisted her three-month campaign, Mrs Macapagal was outside of victory for De Castro, who tailed Legarda in initial unofficial election counts.

Ms Macapagal swallowed part of her own words hard in town hall meetings that De Castro had moderated.

It was one of the trademarks of her campaign, she pointed out, avoiding loud rallies and answering people's immediate concerns in the meetings that she and De Castro called "pulong-pulong," as much as it worked for her, Ms Macapagal said, it was also one of the shortcomings for De Castro.

She said the town hall meeting concept had helped focus on issues, and that she hoped this would become the new practice in future elections.

"[NSO] was very instrumental in making the issues more understandable (in ordinary people)," the President said. During those town hall meetings, she added, she sensed the people that De Castro would be their "bridge" to her and that he would see to it that she would fulfill all the promises she gave them.

'By a landslide'

De Castro has not been visible of late and has refused to take phone calls, but he appeared on television briefly last night to welcome the statement issued earlier in the day via text messaging by his campaign manager Cesar Drilon. The statement said the broadcaster-turned-senator was not bothered by Legarda's initial lead.

"From what I know, initial results being broadcast and written in newspapers reflected mostly initial reports coming from NOI and certain parts of Caloocan and Central (areas where I expected not to do very well)," De Castro said. "However, from Regions I to I.2, Cavite and ARMM, the results are certainly very encouraging and I expected that any doubt that the GMA-Noli team would win."

"Finishing embarrassing last (We're clearly winning)," Chavez said, "maybe not in Metro Manila, but ... in Bicol and all the way down."

For instance, he noted, De Castro was leading in Cebu, Iloilo, Davao and many cities major provinces, and would definitely win "by a landslide" in Bohol.

The message was all

In Concepcion, Tarlac, Aquino's Aquino said he and presidential candidate Jejomar Binay had accomplished their mission.

Their party was able to send out a message of hope, to tell the people that all was not lost, Aquino told the barrios. He said the campaign had provided Aquino with a vehicle to reach out to as many Filipinos as possible.

"It was a struggle. We wanted to make a statement, to tell the people that they had to choose the right leaders," Aquino said. He admitted that the "thought of victory" also occupied their minds. "But it was more the message that we meant to get across, and I think we have done that."

Short of official tally-recording duties, Aquino said, "The people have spoken and we have to respect that."

He said he and the other Aquino candidates were grateful to those who voted for them, as well as those who wanted to vote for them but did not.

Change Comelec culture

An election was "a status of hope" that consisted of many factors, Aquino explained. "The Comelec (Commission on Elections) plays a very important role in this respect, being in the forefront of our democratic institutions."

But he said the "prevailing attitude at the Comelec ... should be changed."

The necessary change was neither "a question of putting [qualified] people there" or a matter of "improving on" some things. "The whole 'culture' or the poll body needed to be reevaluated," he said. "It is a question of management."

SOMETHING'S gonna give when Senators Noli de Castro and Loren Legarda both claim they have clinched the No. 2 post in the land.

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The WORLD

Lito Lorenzo B. Guico

ICRC was told abuse 'part of process'

LONDON—The Red Cross says US troops keeping Iraqi prisoners naked for days in darkness at the Abu Ghraib jail last October and was told by an intelligence officer in charge it was "part of the process," a report leaked on Monday said.

In the 24-page report, the Red Cross also said coalition military intelligence officers estimated up to 90 percent of those detained in Iraq were arrested by mistake.

The report added to the pressure on US officials by revealing that commanders were alerted to suspected abuses at Abu Ghraib months before they opened a criminal investigation.

The Red Cross, which has special access to prisoners under international treaties, said the treatment of prisoners "went beyond exceptional cases and might be considered as a practice tolerated by the CF (Coalition Forces)."

Most were "in some cases ten times naked in a row."

Although aware of the Red Cross' observations concerned US forces, it also jailed prisoners on Wednesday's release ally describing British troops forcing Iraqi detainees to kneel and stomping on their necks in an incident to which one died.

The International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva confirmed that the confidential July 4 report, initially obtained by the US media, the Wall Street Journal, was genuine.

Saying a visit to Abu Ghraib in October, Red Cross delegates witnessed "the practice of keeping persons deprived of their liberty completely naked in totally empty, cold, dark cells and in total darkness," the report said.

"Upon witnessing such cases, the ICRC raised its views and requested an explanation from the authorities. The military intelligence officer in charge of the interrogation explained that this practice was 'part of the process'." Delegates told prisoners who were being held naked in complete darkness. Others were forced to wear women's underwear.

The Red Cross' visit took place two months before pictures were taken of US troops abusing prisoners, which led to US criminal charges against seven soldiers. US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has said he was unaware of abuse until the investigation into the pictures was launched in January.

Those pictures appeared in the media last month, causing international outrage and prompting apologies by US President George W. Bush and other senior officials. However, Washington has said it believed the practices were isolated incidents of aberrant behavior by individuals and not amalgamation.

Although much of the abuse described in the report appeared to have taken place before its jailers ran by US forces, the report also describes the death of an Iraqi prisoner in custody in the British zone of theirs last September.

The victim's name is blacked out, but Britain's defense secretary said it referred to detainee Baha Musa, whose death Britain says it has been investigating since last year. Reuters

Amnesty: UK troops killed unarmed Iraqis

LONDON—Amnesty International accused British soldiers in Iraq on Tuesday of killing civilians, including an 8-year-old girl and a wedding guest, when they posed no apparent threat.

The human rights group said British was underestimating the rule of law in Iraq by failing to investigate properly the suspected unlawful killings.

In a report released amid a storm of allegations about the mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners by Americans and British forces, Amnesty said the British troops' actions had breached international human rights standards.

"The British Army's response to suspected unlawful killing of civilians has undermined, rather than upheld, the rule of law," it said.

"It has failed to conduct investigations into all killings of civilians, and the investigations that have been carried out have failed to ensure that justice was done and to bring those responsible to account."

Amnesty said that in total, US troops had been involved in the killing of at least 37 civilians since May 1, 2003, when the war to topple Saddam Hussein officially ended.

It highlighted nine cases in the southern Iraqi areas of Basra and Amara, including that of 8-year-old Hanan Saleh Shnaini, shot dead on Aug. 11, 2003 near her village.

Its eponymous cold Amnesty Hanan was killed when a soldier aimed at her and fired a shot from around 100 meters away, but the report said she was killed accidentally by a stunning shot.

Amnesty also reported the death of Ghanem Hadheb Bati, who was shot outside his home while celebrating a family wedding.

It said investigations into the killings, if conducted at all, were shrouded in secrecy and victims' families had not been given adequate information about how to apply for compensation.

A defense ministry spokesperson said the government was studying the report. "We are aware of the concerns expressed by Amnesty International and are considering the points it makes. We will respond in detail in due course," he said.

Amnesty also reported on the killings of several civilians during demonstrations and killings of suspected supporters of Saddam's government carried out by armed opposition groups. Reuters

Rebels blast pipeline, slash Iraq oil exports

KIRKUK, Iraq—Guerrillas blasted an oil pipeline, setting off a huge blaze and slashing Iraq's daily oil exports by about 20 percent, US officials said Tuesday. Monday with fighters loyal to radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in the Shiite city south of Baghdad.

US tanks and helicopters dismissed al-Sadr's headquarters in the Baghdad neighborhood of Sadr City in northeastern Kirkuk. US officials said 35 Iraqis were killed before fighting ended just before dawn Monday in the Shiite neighborhood.

Later Monday, a Iraqi but the Shiite neighborhood heard to see road Baghdad, and Al Jazeera television reported renewed clashes in Sadr City. The US command had no comment.

In a statement broadcast by Lebanon's Al Manar television, the "political forces of Sadr City" appealed to US authorities to stop attacks on the district and to "peacefully solve this conflict without violence, terrorism and extreme tracks."

In order to al-Sadr-owned libraries, the troops up the campaign against the US-led occupation.

"The second phase of the fight has not been born yet," the sole, Hussein al-Obeidi, said in Najaf. "This is a struggle for independence, it will end when the Americans leave Iraq."

Elsewhere, US Marines entered the restive city of Ramadi on Monday for the first time since the bloody three-week siege ended last month. The Marines, accompanied by Iraqi forces, returned to the city for about an hour and left without incident.

US officials hailed the move Saturday as a sign that Ramadi was again after the Americans abandoned the siege and turned relations city seen to former soldiers from Saddam Hussein's army. AP

New Chechnya violence feared after leader's slay

CHECHEN man wearing ethnic hats attend a funeral hour during the traditional burial ceremony for their slain leader, President Akhmad Kadyrov, killed in the Terskiy settlement that is home to Kadyrov's clan, southeastern Chechnya, May 10. –

GROZNY, Russia—Marked by 19 years of armed conflict, Chechnya braced itself Tuesday for new violence that many say will follow the weekend assassination of its Kremlin-backed president.

The first attacks came overnight Monday when two Russian were killed and five injured when Chechen rebel grenade launchers attacks a temporary federal base in the southwestern district of Shali, some 40 square kilometers.

While authorities insisted that the situation in the republic would not deteriorate, many militants Chechens said a new round of fighting is all but assured in a region where conflict has raged over or since it first pushed for independence from Russia in the early 1990s.

The mood follows a bomb attack in central Grozny Monday that killed Chechnya's controversial president Akhmad Kadyrov, a muslim rebel who instituted allegiance to Moscow when the current Russo-Chechen war broke out in October 1999.

"Nothing good will come of this," said Shahid, a driver in the capital, refusing the general sentiment. "Nothing."

While several law enforcement officials attending Kadyrov's funeral on Monday insisted that the situation "was under control," Viacheslav Tikhonirov, a top Russian military commander in Chechnya, acknowledged that the conflict could escalate.

"Those who'll try to destabilize the situation, by force, because... We are ready to bring in new reserves if necessary," he said, "We will fight to the end" even if it takes "five, 10, 20 years."

Kadyrov was elected Chechnya's president last October in a fraudulent electoral campaign that illegitimately hailed as the beginning of a political solution to the Chechen war.

But Kadyrov was despised by many here, partly because the thousands among security force he established were blamed for the numerous killings and kidnappings that continue to plague the Caucasus republic.

Although the force was headed by his 23-year-old son Ramzan, still, Kadyrov senior, no one is certain of which the loyalties of their men—many of them former rebels who've been granted amnesty—will be.

Meanwhile separatists in Chechnya—who say they have from 5,000 to 15,000 men at their disposal—have vowed to keep fighting until Russian troops leave.

"The only thing that will change the situation is if they leave and peacekeeping troops come in," Maskhadov, who took support for the rebels in southwestern Chechnya, said last week. Reuters

Japan opposition leader quits

TOKYO—The leader of Japan's biggest opposition party resigned on Monday as his wounded party struggled to repair its image before a parliamentary election just two months away.

Calls for Democratic Party chief Naoto Kan to step down from the top post had mounted since he said last last month that he—like seven members of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's Cabinet—had skipped payments into the state pension scheme.

His failure to pay into the pension system in a timely manner and related huge headaches for the public relations team of his party, and for that top responsibility a huge," Kan told a news-hyped Democratic Party members of parliament.

"So, in front of all of you, I want to take responsibility and resign as party leader," said Kan, a once popular grassroots activist whose image has been tarnished by comparisons with the more telegenic, politically adept Koizumi.

Reform of the pension system, stemming under the burden of Japan's rapidly aging population, has been a hot topic of debate before elections for parliament's Upper House in July.

Pressure on Kan to resign mounted after top government spokesperson Yasuo Fukuda, one of the most powerful members of Koizumi's Cabinet, quit on Friday after making a similar confession. The Democratic leader said he mistakenly skipped payments for 19 months while headed businessmen in 1996.

More members of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) said on Monday they too had missed pension payments, but dismissed calmed rumors that he might have done the same before leading a revolution in 1993, Kyodo news agency said.

Analysts say it's almost impossible for the LDP and its coalition partner to lose their Upper House majority in the July elections.

But a poor showing for the LDP itself would weaken Koizumi's clout in his fourth—and probably final—year in office. Reuters

Tanong ng Bayan

Exit poll, exit poll, paano ka ginawa?

Lumikas na ang exit poll ng Social Weather Station. Dapat ba tayong mamroblema? "Paano ba ginagawa ang exit poll" Ang sagot ng Inquirer columnist Winnie Monsod, napaaaan nanalonal nandatos Orlando Mandos, at Marry Abad, pinaliwanag ng bisit research group na sinakmitata ng SWS. Sigayong alas-10 ng gabi, sa wayna namang election episode ng TV, sa ABC.

ABC

No such thing as 'herbal' Viagra, researchers find

PHILADELPHIA—"Herbal" Viagra and other so-called natural alternatives for treating impotence advertised on the Internet and in men's magazines are often contaminated with real drugs and could land those who take them, researchers said on Monday.

They said the finding was a wake-up warning alternatives to prescription erectile dysfunction drugs are a sign of how popular such products were, but the researchers suggested that government monitor and regulate supplements more closely.

"There are being marketed as being safe and natural products," said Dr. Neil Fleshner of Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto, Canada. "It is plausible that...these have not screened or could screen."

Fleshner and colleagues bought seven "herbal" erectile dysfunction products to find out what was in them.

They contained significant levels of prescription phosphodiesterase inhibitors—sildenafil, sold by Pfizer under the brand name Viagra and tadalafil, lilly and Co Cialis.

"We think the implications of this are quite dramatic," Fleshner told a news conference.

"Since these compounds are not natural, deliberate contamination of these products must be considered," added Fleshner, whose team presented the findings to a meeting of the American Urological Association in San Francisco.

The erectile dysfunction drugs affect blood flow and can be deadly when taken with certain heart drugs containing nitrates.

The researchers said they would continue efforts to get the US Food and Drug Administration to more closely regulate "alternative" products.

Current law allows men purchasing supplements to take what is listed as long as they do not make specific health claims, such as lowering cholesterol. However, the FDA does move to stop the marketing of products that contain prescription medicines.

"The ban in my opinion, is way off the mark," Dr. Ira Sharlip of Pacific Urology in San Francisco told the news conference.

A British study said other herbal products could also be dangerous.

Dr. Ramesh Thamotharan and colleagues at the Bristol Royal Infirmary in Bristol, Britain said "Google" Internet search using the words "herbal" and "Viagra."

"I actually picked up 150,000 hits last year," Thamotharan told a news conference. "Two weeks ago I typed the same two words in and got 690,000 hits." Reuters

WORLDBRIEFS

Israel troops killed in Gaza blast

GAZA—An explosion ripped through an armored military vehicle in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday, killing six soldiers in the deadliest single blast since three Palestinians, witnesses said. Six soldiers were killed in the blast, Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said. In evaluating evidence in the coastal territory since a Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's right-wing Likud party voted against the Gaza pullout plan on May 6. Reuters

Access to Saddam denied, says lawyer

AMMAN—Saddam Hussein's defense lawyers said on Monday they had received no response from the US administration to requests the International Committee of the Red Cross for repeated requests to see their client. Lawyers representing the ousted leader also said they were unable to meet past lawyers seen abroad by US and British authorities, whose actions are regarded people around the world. "We are willing to take legal action against the US administration and the Red Cross if they don't allow us to see Mr President Saddam," said Jordanian lawyer Mohammad Rashdan, one of a 30-strong legal team appointed by Saddam's wife to represent him. Reuters

India polls head for hung parliament

NEW DELHI—India's main political parties stepped up backroom negotiations to attract coalition partners on Tuesday after post-election exit polls pointed to a hung parliament with everything trading for. Exit polls released after the last phase election suggested a nationalist Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) might not retain its power, a dramatic turnaround for a man honeymoon in the confidence votes for called the election six months early. The payoff had landed on a strong economy, a good monsoon and improving ties with Pakistan propaganda in Each location. But the campaign motto of "India Shining" failed to resonate with many rural and urban poor who had excluded from the economic boom. Musings in the wings is the opposition Congress party led by Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born widow of assassinated former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who is now scrambling to put together a coalition of her own, something unthinkable six months ago. Reuters

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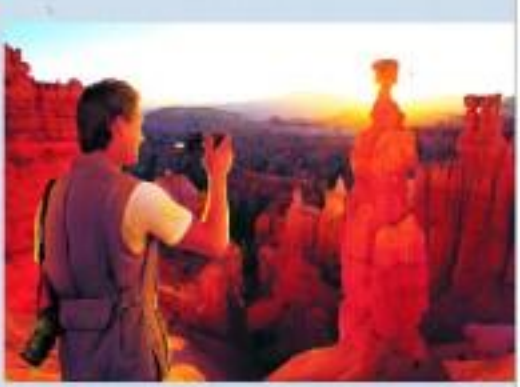

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OPINION

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Reproach

THE CONDUCT of the national election last Monday was a testament to the enduring patience of teachers, voters, volunteers and even policemen and military men. It was, however, a resounding reproach to the Commission on Elections. It was a monument, in a sense, to relegation and misplaced priorities.

The public and the politicians were unanimous in dreading a hassle-free election, with a swift count of the results to follow. Through a combination of bad judgement, ineptitude and shady deals, the Comelec bungled the chances to pursue effective automation, and spent hundreds of millions on half-baked schemes that only further muddled the count lists. The result, of course, was an insufficiency of supplies in many precincts, or lost forms and materials, and the disenfranchisement of thousands of voters.

The disenfranchisement on did have reached a scale not seen since the notoriously rigged polls of 1986. Neither the Comelec nor Namfrel can say how many voters were deprived of their right to select their leaders. But the anecdotal evidence seems disturbing.

The chief complaint of those who couldn't vote was that their names had disappeared or got mangled. As a result, the identities even of people who had voted many times before were questioned or they were simply denied their right to vote. And yet there were the usual cases of the dead remaining on lists, indicating that neither the old lists were purged to the new ones properly drawn up to effectively take their place.

Further complicating matters was the lack of initiative displayed by some school teachers or Comelec officials who did not try to facilitate voting for those who had a right to do so. Some of the disenfranchised managed to eventually vote through sheer persistence; many more did not because of bureaucratic obstacles. Hardest hit were first-time voters whose initiation into the electoral process consisted of the denial of their right of suffrage.

The Comelec reacted to the complaints of disenfranchised voters by resorting what they should have done. That helps no one and merely rubs salt on the wound. There was no expression of regret, or even remorse and certainly no attempt to replace speculation with hard numbers concerning the disenfranchised. The teachers, too, was given short shrift, with no explanation given as to why an already onerous task was made more difficult due to the glitches in the system of distributing election paraphernalia.

In short, there was a total failure of leadership.

We hope this will be the last election of this nature held in this country. The solutions were there long before this election, and they remain solutions even as the next election seems still far away for some people. Foremost among these is the dropping of the Comelec's adversarial attitude toward the public and the private sector. Second is the adoption of more transparent bidding procedures and holding technical consultations to ensure that any automated voting system will comply with the law. Third is raising the standards for the men and women who will be appointed to the Comelec.

The Comelec at this point is not totally discredited because the public will manages to distinguish the inherent abilities of the present leadership from the rank and file who can only do as well as their superiors guide them. Buffeted by legal and public relations storms of its own making, the Comelec has been looking rudderless. This sorry state should not be allowed to persist for long. Our democracy can ill afford it.

Game for the rich

EDITORIAL

AMERICANS are very street-smart. The man in politics the race for the US presidency will not escape their lifetime, a new record.

This milestone shows the perilous state of American democracy. Defraying a most important state policy for both Democrats and Republicans. It's not about a message but about damaging your opponents.

The reason nothing organized in the campaign will succeed is their disgust with politics.

No more and more Americans: democracy is a playground for the rich. Hopefully this new record will bring the world's most powerful democracy, which wants to battle to be in its simple for others, to its senses.

Algemeen Dagblad (Rotterdam, Netherlands)

Poll can end like Pacquiao-Marquez fight

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

It happened (before) it can happen again.

A bright spot in the nonstop race on hours in the early morning) is that now fewer are in the winning circle, the movie stars are not voting at high as expected, and some tropics are trailing. Making a surprise showing is Senator Rodrigo (RNP), who is ranked 8th or of this writing, and Pia Cayetano (LP), ranked 8th. Bong Revilla (NPC) is within striking distance at 17. However, her fellow movie stars—Bong Revilla, Jinggoy Estrada and Lito Lapid—are not faring so well as the survey predicted.

Reelectionist senators and former senators—Rodolfo Biazon, Ruben Ancheta, Tessie Mercado, Orly Mercado, Ed Vinzal, John Osmeña and Robert Jaworski—are not faring too well. On the other hand, underdog Frank Chavez in the floor slides is fighting it out with three close to the winning circle.

Sadly, some of the Muslim candidates—Santanina Rasul, Ehpi Hamadodon and Dan Flaviano—are not even mentioned in the tabulations, but that is because the votes from Mindanao and the Visayas provinces are not in yet.

An endorsement of the firm pay the lightest in Cotabato has not benefited Senator Lacson in the provinces in Batangas from Eat, the consumer are behind in many church in Quezon City candidates who were not on the INC sample ballot got more. The counting was first-hard very close to the INC sample ballot. The votes like cotton seem to like INC sample ballot.

It is easy to understand why INC members vote this way. In communities where only INC members live, a few votes that are in from the INC sample ballot would be a big scandal. An investigation can easily be set up; the disobedient members who can be expelled from their church and their communities.

Some members I talked to said they were not happy over the choices made by their leaders and would have preferred to vote for other candidates but that they were afraid to disobey orders. For example, they had been taught earlier not to vote for women as leaders, but this year they were told to vote for a woman for President.

And do you know that INC members actually spy on their neighbors to find out how they voted? One household said her husband accompanied her to the polling booth to make sure she voted for the candidates on the INC sample ballot.

In other words, there is no democracy within the INC. The members don't have the freedom that God gave to all human beings. There is only dictation from the leaders, a mixed metaphor, I have no quarrel with their leaders' dictating the religious teachings of their church, but voting for leaders of government, no. That is where the line is drawn between church and state. That is already enshrined in positive government, and they are prohibited by the Constitution because they have been abused before in other countries.

If we don't watch out, we may become another Iran with Filipino clericals but long the power of life and death over citizens, like the priests during the Inquisition have the power of life and death over the people in the Iran having the power of life and death over Filipinos through the agents of religion.

Here and therefore, the propagandists and the businessmen, as well as the other media environments, saw this danger more than 100 years ago. But like most of the Filipino heroes, also during the Spanish regime, the Filipino clericals don't recognize to what's now through techniques in the priests of Spanish friars but in the person of Filipino religious leaders.

Definitions

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I WILL query the networks the wonder of calling news and the my opinion of what happened in these elections. It has these defining characteristics, some of which might tend to the favor of whoever is in power.

The first is the utter lack of issue. The last true presidential elections at least had some kind of presidential issues. The first was the agreed thing Estrada an odd job man who was the people's champion, and Ejercito, the rich who managed to win the confidence of rich in France, whose right seemed much tolerance space and an issue from media quite apart from the real displays of selection was from the media.

There was no debate this time. Erap suggest Dinky Soliman is the new Filipino Democracy. Atienza is the young man from Manila who topped the medical board exams but accepted a job as a caregiver in New York. He reminded the new Filipino identities at this point. The question today is: What can you say or a Filipino is a person free from leaving the country to clean the toilet bowls of the world?

But nobody took up the suggestion. FPJ merely avoided the call for a debate, as did GMA, who said she would debate only with FPJ. With reason. A debate with the other candidates would have done disservice to her as usual as not rather than the hypothetical issues she wanted Filipinos to imagine with FPJ. The only issue that developed in the end was the GMA's use of public funds to campaign, but that fell through in part because the other candidates could not latch on to it and in part for lack of public outrage. This country has gotten so inured to outright graft that it has learned to choose a President campaigning with taxpayers' money as a natural expenditure.

This brings us to the second defining characteristic of the elections. What took the place of issues? The answer is cutting.

Survey-cutting can in the case of nearly one every three weeks, and they pretty much became the center of public attention. The only question was how accurate they were, and whether or not they were being manipulated. The elections were not about how far the candidates went for public office—that question the GMA camp successfully managed to sack on only to FPJ—they were about how well the candidates were doing in the surveys.

It should be interesting for pictures candidates, especially media's role in the role of surveys in these elections and their role in issues ones. Especially in media's role in the last election elections in Philippine elections (since 1992 anyway, replacing machinery and systems) that the role of the media has been so dominant that has been added to it. This is various ways, however, other extended picture must use the exposure. If these elections are anything to go by, preimposed survey ratings over a period of time may now have even being in close the re-election. You do not have to be a television host or a news anchor to win, you need only be projected either as the strongest candidate, or the "candidate to beat," or as the candidate that is likely to be the one to beat. The last was the GMA story line. If she won these elections, it would be likely only to say those elections were decided by surveys.

There are two reasons why surveys exert a powerful impact on this country. The first is that cities coalesce more than most cultures in explanation for the boundless optimism. This is a culture that stands beleaguering, getting along, agreeableness. This is not a culture that wants individualism, independence or loneliness. "Going along with the others" is the motto of the disciples. This is a culture that revolves doing in the world for surveys to confirm every minute.

The second reason is due to the all their visual scientific usefulness; surveys do not see as scholarly studies, they act as vulgar advertisements. What makes them "necessary" is not their intrinsic properties, it is their self-fulfillment. It is not their rigorous methods, it is their subjective appeal. Even ability to rule indicate. Boastful Filipinos a candidate is seeing they will flock to him or her. Not a part of belonging, getting along, being agreeable. No one wants to be outside the community the neighbors, the the collective. No one wants to be "losing labor."

I do not know if surveys should be subject to regulations. I personally think they should be proscribed during the campaign period I cite. They do not add to the quality of elections, they detract from it. They do not make people offer a genuine of issues, they turn it into a question of numbers. The other option is for media, who are stated goal is to make things better, rather than worse, not to use them at all. Otherwise the results of one in this area elections will simply be "Work on the survey makers."

The last defining characteristic of these elections is the use of public funds to campaign. This was often the reason of the Commission on Elections' inability to prosecute, which was why they stipulated only a single term for presidents. So as candidates could concentrate the affairs of government to campaign. That was not often happened. A legal effort to get GMA to put her money where her mouth is. The Supreme Court did the wrong in done by refusing to overturn of the Fifth Amendment," i.e. that it is not a crime of fraud, only charges pile.

The implication of GMA's use of public funds to campaign will have a very profound impact not just on future elections but on the conduct of government itself. Particularly if she wins. If she wins, have not just elevated her to use public funds for private ends but also rewarded her with another term, which will give her the freedom to use public funds for public ends?

These are the defining characteristics of the last elections. They define a not very bright future.

Moving away from political turbulence

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

THE 2004 election put to the test the image of rebellion Filipinos have cultivated for a decade out of the chronic cycle of political leadership change determined by people power turbulence in which two-party contenders used elements—military intervention and mob rule—played personal and external rules to overthrowing hated regimes. Responses of who rules by the people's election were the message that the country has witnessed from mainstream people-power politicos and has resumed normal politics to the people using the vote, rather than guns, to effect orderly political change back to the hands of the people.

The election marked the watershed that returned politics to constitutional channels. The message is clear: the people have locked the lobe of people power, but it is no longer considered the only instrument of democracy. The message is also the people have reclaimed their right to change governments, thereby resuming politics to the mechanisms of elections, to the peaceful constitutional processes. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has been given a fresh mandate to run the government, but she has also been given a mandate to use her term as end to a transitional presidency installed through extra-constitutional means, legitimized by military power and by judicial fiat. How large an electoral mandate will close the new administration will be determined by the final count of votes. But even if the Arroyo administration that the new Macapagal presidency will enjoy a new mantle of legitimacy, enjoying a mandate freely given by the people.

The size of the win for the new presidency is of secondary importance. What is clear is that having installed the people's vote. Whether or not the Bell and official Commission on Elections counts can, the vote more than 10 percent of the nation-wide to challenge the legitimacy of the Arroyo government and provoked the incentive for street-based military coups.

Joseph Estrada's thrust of power around the theater of people power and military intervention. The installation of then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as President, through the ousting of Estrada and creating ground swells of military's withdrawal of support from the elected government effectively left the first Macapagal presidency vulnerable to persistent challenges as to its legitimacy.

The election can therefore be considered in a convention sense that breaks the spell of many constitutional means of changing presidents. It brings the nation back to the normal electoral rules of political change.

The implication of the return to normal electoral politics of the undergoing by political change is that a objective military's dramatic act as an excuse to destabilize or to topple a popularly elected government. It also foreclosures military-linked intervention style in politics by the Philippine Constabulary Code. Under the Constabulary, the Code was revised to play an extraordinary role of keeping political authority on the basis a loyal being the service of Philippine democracy has become more loyal challenges were made on the legitimacy of government.

The new Macapagal administration should enter office with much fewer handicaps than the three-year government that spanned People Power II and the 2004 election.

Despite defects in the election machinery, there is no doubt that the election clearly swamped the new government as an elected government, and not one that was imposed upon us, subsidies the outcome of the voting opened with our preferences or not. The process of establishing political legitimacy has been completed with the vote. The significance of the election is that it puts behind us an era of political volatility fueled by mob rule disguised as people power.

Torture and terror

"TO MANY people on the Middle East, the symbol of America is not the Statue of Liberty but a prisoner standing on a box wearing a dark cape, a dark hood over his head, afraid he is going to be electrocuted."

That was how Edward Kennedy commenting, during an investigative hearing, on the abuses of Iraqi prisoners by US occupation troops. He was referring to one of the photographs that had been leaked to the press, one of the sadistic persons, a nurse can, unlawfully stopped and digital. It aroused to horror the aspect of the many photographs.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

pictures by The New Yorker, shows a naked Iraq man cowering in fear at dogs and sadistic female him. There is another photograph, which The New Yorker decided not to publish, showing the man on the floor, in a pool of blood with his leg shredded by a dog's bite wound.

The local response has been mainly repressed news articles from international wire services, buried in the inside pages. In contrast, newspapers throughout the world, especially in Arab countries, have featured the stories on these horrific photographs, which have caused widespread outrage.

I will admit that on my part, my initial reaction was that there was one reduced incident occurring in this Abuse prison. Of course, even one case of torture is never acceptable and it is bad core basis for this exercise, I would have written it off as one of those things. But the fact is that there are, though, with more reports, including revelations that there are many more photographs and videotapes, and that abuses took place not just in this Abuse but in other facilities. I'm beginning to believe that was part of a systematic campaign of armed sadists part of the US government.

"Ano?" I can't hear you over the hooting, as others have, "wasn't Saddam Hussein the worst?"

Sure, but let's not forget that the United States and the United Kingdom (whose soldiers have also been implicated in other abuses) invaded Iraq supposedly to liberate the Iraqis from Saddam to establish democracy and respect for human rights.

Now the world has even more reason to question the real motives of the US government for their invasion, and to wonder if George W. Bush even understands what human rights means. Yes, he's apologized for what has happened and called the incident "disgraceful" but he has done little else. Paul Bremer, head of the "coalition" occupation forces so long, has done even less, as even bothering to visit the detention centers.

Of course, this impunity probably makes some observers shudder at what else may be in store for the administration during the last two years. First, they opposed the establishment of an International Criminal Court that would try, among others, war crimes. The position of the US government was that Americans should be exempt from prosecution by the court.

Second, although the United States was a signatory to the Geneva Convention, which provides the same protection of the rights of prisoners of war, the leaders said that the Convention's rules would not apply to prisoners captured by the United States in their war against terror.

The reason why the Geneva Convention should not apply to the war on terror, the United States government argued, is because al-Qaeda members are a private battle in Guantanamo Bay, they specifically declared that the Geneva Convention provisions would not apply to that prison.

It is now known that the United States government has one of many abuses uncovered in other prisons, including sexual humiliation, rape and beatings. It is known, too, that a number of intelligence officers from the Guantanamo facility eventually went to Iraq, training Abu Ghraib prison to train the troops there in "new techniques," techniques which we now are getting a glimpse of in the photographs.

The Washington Post reports that Maj. General Geoffrey Miller, who ran the Guantanamo camp, visited Iraq last September to offer "suggestions on how to make interrogations more efficient and effective," apparently that military intelligence officers in Iraq should "Gitmo-ize" detainees.

Ominously, following the reports of prison abuses, Miller was appointed to oversee all prison operations in Iraq. Nikolas Dodd, writing in the British newspaper The Guardian, sarcastically comments on the perceptive he returns with Miller's appointment: "He could at least ensure that prisoners are treated humanely."

The statistics. People wonder why photographs and videotapes were taken. One theory was that it was a perverse form of trophy taking but now such revelations that there were many more photographs and videotapes, it's clear that the identity was the point of the torturer pictures. Especially in the Arab culture, such sexual humiliation or nudity, losing your pictures taken while sexual being, or being made to simulate oral and anal "penetrating" getting bodies taken on tape were considered as really demoralizing.

The other weaponry, such as covering a man's head (in some cases, with women's underwear) and threatening him with electrocution are actually old hat for the American troops. A 1983 General Intelligence Agency manual talks about how common techniques can be used "to induce psychological regression ... to force certain behaviors to will to resist." Among the techniques mentioned are "threats of imminent or more effectively than the exercise itself. For example, the threat is conflict pain can trigger fear; more disrupting have the immediate execution of pain."

It has since been revealed that the Pentagon (US military) already has a report on "exploiting the feelings of hopelessness and guilty fearfulness of men tortured first" when Bishop committed in Iraq has apparently an unsuccessful one. Now that the abuses have been exposed, we're getting token apologies from the US government on one hand, often followed by arrogant defensiveness.

Asked about the torture hearing if he would resign, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld first seemed startled, submitting for brief thought about it, but ended with a sneer, "If I felt I could not be effective, I'd resign immediately." President Bush also apologized, on Arab television interviews, but then he also said that Rumsfeld was doing "a superb job."

There can be that might that we should be looking as with all these reports of abuses, atrocities and by homogenous democracies having conspiring for sex, torture is used not just to torture people, but to humiliate them, to destroy their personal personal whether about their dispositions, but we know now, that as remember power against democracies and foreign occupations forces, torture becomes more feminine in its perpetrators are to change as in power.

Time to prepare for computerization

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

With would think we would have gotten a right by now. But reports on the immediate aftermath of Monday's voting contained much the same complaints that we've been hearing since the automated counting machines were introduced in the 2001 elections: long lines, confusion at polling precincts, inadequate delivery of election supplies, flying errors, even harassment in the middle of the counting.

But now could we have gotten used to the chaos and confusion that is the election process? Or are we simply overcome resigned to let in a state of hyper-alertness and vigilance for any sign of cheating, this year's polls seemed to be skewed with, if not manipulation, then irregularities. I don't think there is any doubt that the people who voted for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has been given a fresh mandate to run the government, but the question right after the vote has put an end to a transitional presidency installed through extra-constitutional means, legitimized by military power and by judicial fiat. How large an electoral mandate will close the new administration will be determined by the final count of votes. But even if the Arroyo administration that the new Macapagal presidency will enjoy a new mantle of legitimacy, enjoying a mandate freely given by the people.

The size of the win for the new presidency is of secondary importance. What is clear is that having installed the people's vote. Whether or not the Bell and official Commission on Elections counts can, the vote more than 10 percent of the nation-

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wide pattern and scale of instability.

Randy David, appearing on ANC's "Undiscussed 2004," said that it is not the election results per se that could threaten, but rather the large investment, Republican or who wins, he said, what could hamper the Philippines' investment climate is the instability in the aftermath of the election results and the image of instability this would directly create.

But above all, he, than the opposition mandated barrier calls a press conference and angrily denounces the results as pervasive as a "repeat" of election him and his party issues, then he is putting this image of stability on the line. It may be too early to declare the polls fraudulent, but let's not jump the gun and declare the elections the results of the partial and unofficial counts that so far have given leads to Ms Macapagal.

He was cancelled and Allan, chosen concession ground of dissenting as a monitor calls would be for the first of the 2004 to reflect a media of dissent as they say, documents the documents of alleged cheating as completely as they can, and bring their cases to the courts.

* * *

ANYONE looking right into the latter watching would have come to an unavoidable conclusion: We need computerized voting and counting!

These days when some lucky laborers collect their salaries via ATM, when hundreds of thousands of Filipino workers keep track of remittances by electronic means and keep in touch through real-time drawing on the Internet, it makes no sense why we should continue to rely on the messy, confusing, time-consuming manual process.

Of course, the Comelec may well blame the Supreme Court for mandating that computerization cannot be. But the poll body may not just use semi-automated and discrepancies included, it really to blame for that mess. The Computerized Voting Law already mandated that the poll body begin its computerization drive operations but then dragged their feet and persisted in pursuing an automation experiment project instead, resulting in millions of squandered public funds.

The same the Comelec has begun preparing for computerization is now applying many of the lessons learned in Monday's exercise.

The only positive aspect of this messy situation is that the winning widens prolonged, in the counting of votes, we'll have a chance to see what went wrong in preparation for these two polls. Next time, we would have learned many things to apply so that we can minimize. If we had been able to count, parse the vote polls, then perhaps the Mayhem might have been avoided. But we'll have to wait and see, for how do you bring computer into a country that has been perennially troubled back to the Stone Age? But to it is, the Filipino surely learned a lot from Monday's chaos and confusion. I only hope they didn't learn how to cheat as well!

* * *

MORE than once the election coverage showed "election" of Binay issues, who showed up as their presidents to cast their ballots only to discover that someone else had already voted in their name. Binay's camp was quick to cry foul, and rightly so, in their mind, arguing to police stations and demanding that they be given the right to vote.

I left early for church, but couldn't help recalling Sen. Tito Sotto ex-Filipino from campaigner and spokesman, who had also been a victim of these same scenarios early on.

Contrast this with the United States where a clear and sunny day is viewed as lead as a drop in voter turn-out as most people would prefer to remain indoors than drive to the polls to exercise their franchise by lining up in front of the polling booths.

Our elections may be messy, the counting may take longer than is civilized, but at least we still can't succumb to voter's travel when something goes wrong.

A tektite falls in Pampanga

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

BERNARD Capinpin got the title of his book "Anyone of Portrait" from Shakespeare. He thinks, that Irish-century saint, mystic and doctor of the Church, like is supposed to have said (and rightly so) that there were are dead were recovered parents to their resurrected sons.

The devotees are rare and Philippine life is remarkable regardless of who is involved in the Fabian by the Piang. In each case we will know whether or fought of on whom the recovered prayers last Monday. My recovered prayer was simply to cope with the hardest deadline ordeal of my life, which is to write this full in Pampanga in 2004.

Where I vanished me in Bataan performing all sorts of odd jobs to survive. My experience in Dapitan for posing in the Bonifacio Museum and various scholars' award. Bicarpo. Every school child knows that there is a long, a big and a ringed head whose Luis scientific name ends with "ensis," in effect it is the hero who made them read.

What is not widely known is that Rizal is also considered the father of Philippine archaeology for a modern collection of pre-colonial specimens. Prehistory he was a small gold pilasters, enamored with Philippine antiquities. Rizal's interest in collecting that is why participated excursion. We also know that during his exile in Dapitan, he was shown a gray polished stone tool that Dapitanon believed were the broken tools that lightning left when it hit the ground. Rizal recovered it, identified them as pre-historic adzes. I wouldn't be surprised if Rizal had an "aerolite" in his collection of curiosities, pieces of black stone that fell from the sky that we know today as tektites. Pure Pyrexices referred to these with their indigenous Philippine names: tektites, tektites, or simply tells believed about to be electrocuted from space.

Browsing through issues of the 19th-century magazine Ilustracion Filipina, Rev. Francisco Lopez Gainza, a Recoleto priest who was stationed in the Our Lady Buenavista parish in La Perspectiva in the June 1, 1859 issue. The article reads in part:

"A few minutes before five o'clock in the afternoon of April 3 (1859), an extraordinary thunderline like sound of cannon shot and heavy gunshots were heard in the town of Lubao, province of the ancient town of the province of Pampanga. Many people, especially those who were harvesting palay, ran in a confusion direction a tall range of smoke passing over the town and ending in a field, and there dropped a strange object. The town were anxious to examine the object. Some of them took it as a meteor direction with a depth of three spans. From this hole, they extracted a big stone, which was still very hot and smoky. A farmer, a certain Mr. Basil, who was nearby when the stone was extracted, said that the persons who witnessed this phenomenon and he held in his hands this meteoric stone.

"The golden-brown color of the stone gas held of this curious object, took the declarations of the witnesses and their investigations concerning it, and passed the documents to Mr. Dr. Hidalgo, the governor of the province, who in turn sent it to the Excellency's the Governor General."

This is now such an event would be worth noting, but not in the 21st century would be not. Most to notice is the huge Pepe Pharmacy and the law he had to achieve in Manila and Spain to complete our knowledge of what happened. Two specimens were gathered from Asuncion Agustin, Liliano Centeno, Mariano Medina, Timoteo Tubal, Roque Paulino Tubal Roque, José Teresa Silverio, Mariano de los Santos, Blas Tiongco Cruz, Fernando Tubal Roque, Pedro Pineda, Juan Bonilla Antonio, and Gregorio de Villanueva. Didn't anyone see it?

Ghanchanan Mijares cook quotes from Agoni, a former gobernadorcillo.

"I hereby declare and certify that yesterday afternoon, around a quarter to five, I, a native and resident of this town of Lubao, province of Pampanga, witnessed above this stone, and in the middle of the movement gave a sound of some not reference (Subconscious). It appeared this stone until to there a thing that looks like to crucifix to what I saw in the gas-lit pieces (Fr. Rizal) I can, just as pieces of Manila's from (1862-1863). The stone when the damage stone fell is what we call pila, is removed the ground about a yard (about 3.8 feet), making a hole not bigger than the stone. The said two-part land used for about 4 minutes, and those who are holding of the stone said that it was very hot. After the whole stone was removed each stone, but only three-fourths pulse can the stone falling, which I put in consistency and sign together with the witnesses who accompany me to this Casa Principal of Mayantoc, on the 3rd of [illegible]."

Why is a meteorite or tektite big or right out of the "X-Files"? The stone repeatedly sent to the Madrid Museum of Natural History are apparently mostly a lost loss, had a width of eight inches and weighed 23 pounds. It was rough and although covered an amphibolite, which is probably his explains why it was collected by investigators.

My wish to thank Pete Francisco for that helpful research with us and hope he works down the stone to Made it to make.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ocampo@pacific.net.ph

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LETTERS

Helpless against graft?

WHY does it take so long to bring to closure court cases involving government funds, such as graft and corruption?

I cannot understand the delays. I can understand if the cases involve murder, homicide, robbery, etc., where witnesses are not enough and lawyers have recourse to credible physical evidence such as those obtaining from a professional investigation or laboratory work.

Cases involving money, however, can readily be evidenced by bank account records, financial reports, Bureau of Internal Revenue files and other legal papers. These records can be used as means of comparisons, enough to either acquit or convict a defendant. Financial events can be reconstructed, in a heartbeat. Or manipulated. So, why the delays?

So many prominent cases of corruption. By all rest, yet hardly a trickle—just the negligible tatter ones—get decided by the courts.

I hope the government (the Executive, Congress and Judicial branches) can do better.

—PETE SALAMBAO,
Carmona 2009@aol.com

Inglorious museum

IN THE INQUIRER's "Letters" section last April 23, an Angeles City man wrote about the "grandness" of making a movie celebrating the heroism of the "last samurai warriors," the kamikaze pilots who crashed their planes into US ships at the end of World War II.

A "noble" class, maybe, framed by a "code of honor and patriotism" in the belief that their suicide would guarantee a glorious hereafter.

I have no problem with a person's religious beliefs, even though the divine rewards whose lure plane slammed into my (Navy lieutenant) uncle's destroyer in Leyte Gulf blew hot to kingdom come.

But I have a problem with the fact that the kamikaze pilots were based in the Philippines. As if when they began their journey to immortality in mere moments) that how they ended: 12,000 American lives and left 36,000 others crippled.

Isn't that a little like someone in Germany today glorifying Hitler's "sacred imperative" to rid Europe of late (million) Jews in order to purify the white race?

In fact, the letter writer cites a museum (named after him) in Angeles City, a gallery of memorabilia that exists solely to romanticize the same kind of "purification" process that reduced the World Trade Center to ashes.

How many Filipinos, I wonder, would visit a museum that glorifies the Japanese occupation's excesses of World War II?

And lastly, how many Japanese today would visit a kamikaze shrine which in their country would probably be against the law? (And political stupidity for anyone found visiting one here.)

A museum we embarrassing, in my opinion, for anybody to want to visit, and yet some people apparently do.

—ELLIOT ANDERSEN,
P.O. box 1760,
Binondo City

Minimizing the PPA

WITH the deregulation of the power industry, the private sector constructed power plants in excess of the needed total capacity then charged the unsuspecting public for the idle capacity through power purchase adjustment (PPA), to obtain the desired profit margin.

Meanwhile, the government owned National Power Corporation had to opt for full operation rather than shutting down some of its power plants and letting them go idle (which would have resulted in bigger losses). But the Napocor does not have commercial take-or-pay contracts similar to that enjoyed by the privately-owned independent power producers (IPPs).

While the investments on the excess or reserve capacity has to earn a rate of return, this situation can be alleviated in favor of the public. Firstly, instead of the private IPPs charging Meralco for the unused but guaranteed capacity, the government should have the IPPs operate in full and let the government-owned Napocor maintain the reserve capacity with similar guaranteed payments if not used. This way, the favorable treatment enjoyed by the IPPs would go to the Filipino people—contrary of the Napocor, whose power plants would last longer because they would not be subjected to fast wear and tear while in reserve.

Secondly, to minimize the take-or-pay charge on reserve capacity the government's power plants should not be 100 percent privatized. Selected plants, with a total capacity equivalent to the grid reserve, should remain with the Napocor. This way reserve capacity would not have to be charged at the regular rate of return demanded by private investors but just at the rate imposed by creditors, or even at break-even rate, because its objective is service, not profit. As an instrument of national policy, the Napocor should stay where private investors fear to tread—in the field of public service at a minimal rate of return.

In any case, the per kilowatt-hour (kWh) charge for the unused capacity should not include variable costs, like bunker fuel oil, that are not incurred while the power plants are on standby.

In addition, unlike in an April 2003 Meralco bill wherein the guaranteed PPA rate of P0.89/kWh per kWh was higher than the energy charge of P0.761 per kWh, the guaranteed rate charged by IPPs to Meralco should not be passed on at a price per peso basis to Meralco customers, as the ratio of unused capacity to used capacity is less, not one-to-one. Instead, the weighted average of the used and unused capacity charges should be billed to customers, and this should lead to lower PPA charge. Incidentally, the government, which initiated the change in the Meralco billing system, should correct itself and require power distributors to restore the disclosure of the PPA rate in their monthly bills. This will enable the public to promptly spot unusually high PPA rates, these being prone to abuse.

—ROBERTO G. TICZON,
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Monkey trick

LABOR Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas explained there would be "no wage hike on Labor Day" (PDI, 4/27/04) as it might be misconstrued as vote buying. What a monkey trick! It was not election season in May 2003 and workers went home from the Labor Day (the) empty handed. There was no election in May 2002 and not a modicum of news benefits for employees came. For once, let us call a spade a spade! There has been no adjustment in minimum wage in the last three years because it would hurt the business and industry sectors. In this season, alas, there are many variants of vote buying.

Another unmistakable variant is the distribution of PhilHealth cards even to non-traditional members of the SSS or of the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. Whoever masterminded this campaign strategy must be a genius. These cards are indeed better than cash; these recipients will surely vote for President Macapagal-Arroyo. Otherwise, if she lost in the coming polls, these much bid-lybuzzed cards might be dishonored by her successor. The thing is, she top SSS and other IDs, the PhilHealth card I hold carries my work status and photo, and those cards display the picture of the President. My goodness, I did not know that there is ingenuity in the government.

And to last Labor Day, instead of the elusive wage hike, Metro Manila workers got free train rides, discounts in commercial establishments, tickets to a professional basketball league or to a concert and other concocted bribes. Alas, that is adding insult to injury for the majority of the nation's laborforce that has long been reeling from intolerable wages in the midst of hallooning inflation.

—RUDY L. CORDERO,
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Golden Country Homes,
Mangilao, Batangas City

Behind Roco's success at DepEd

THIS is in connection with two recent columns of Conrado de Quiros, which were published in the Inquirer on April 15 and 26. Let me reproduce the portions of special interest to the Department of Education.

"Secretary Bondal turned in the Department of Education, turning it from a cesspool into the country's No. 1 department, speaks for itself." (PDI, 4/15/04)

"Secretary Bondal once cured a sick institution called the Department of Education, an institution that was knocking at death's door. Talk of miracle cures, to but a year's time he turned it around from one of the country's most corrupt departments to its most efficient one." (PDI, 4/26/04)

Perhaps De Quiros exaggerates in describing the DepEd at the time of Secretary Bondal's coming...as a "cesspool," the country's most corrupt institution, waiting at death's door. No matter, I think we can still cope with pride the recognition of the DepEd, by no less, in a critic of this administration as De Quiros, as the No. 1 most efficient agency in the bureaucracy. Whatever Roco might have achieved during his term must, of course, also redound to some measure to the credit of President Macapagal-Arroyo who appointed him and supported his efforts.

I will call attention to another point that De Quiros appears to ignore. I do not believe Roco could have achieved whatever is in De Quiros believes he was able to achieve in one year without the assistance and support of the teachers, officials and staff.

—EDILBERTO C. DE JESUS,
secretary,
Department of Education,
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Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Burgonio

Pacificador takes lead over Antique rivals

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
INQ7 Dispatch Bureau

SAN JOSE, Antique—Detained former secretary Adriano Adriano Pacificador is leading in the race for the governorship, according to unofficial and unofficial results of the quick count conducted by the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel).

As of 11:30 a.m. yesterday, Pacificador had 5,816 votes, ahead of his two rivals, incumbent provincial board members Rhoderic Cadiao and Felix Oyardo.

Cadiao of the Lakas-CMD had 1,988 votes and 1,154 votes for Oyardo of the Liberal Party.

The votes all came from 40 out of the 120 precincts of the capital town of San Jose. The province has 18 towns with a total of 1,249 precincts.

Aside from San Jose, Pacificador said he was tallying no votes from the southern towns especially his hometown, Hamtic, which has the third largest number of voters next to Tibiao and San Jose.

Antique Rep. Exequiel Javier, a passenger of Cadiao, said it was difficult to determine who was leading in the vice gubernatorial race.

Confidence

He said he was confident that Cadiao would win because they were expecting to get the bulk of her votes from the northern towns of the governor including her hometown Culasi.

Pacificador filed his candidacy despite being detained at the Antique provincial jail in San Joaquin of murder, frustrated murder and attempted murder along with 17 others in connection with the murder of former Antique governor Evelio Javier on Feb. 11, 1986.

Pacificador had asked the Antique Regional Trial Court to grant him bail to campaign (in his candidacy) because he believed the court would be unable to resolve the case before the May 10 elections.

But in a one-page order dated May 3, Judge Buda Cayetano, who is presiding over the case, denied Pacificador's motion, saying he needed more time to study the evidences presented by Pacificador in the 15-year-old case.

The trial of the case ended last Feb. 18. Cayetano is expected to resolve the case on the latter part of June under court rules.

Slipped out

But Pacificador was able to attend a confidential forum on May 2 organized by Namfrel and the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting at the Emilio R. Javier Freedom Park in San Jose. Police Chief Supt. Ed Cuadrado denied his claims that he be allowed to attend the activity.

Pacificador explained that he knew only of the court order disallowing him to attend the forum, after he delivered his speech. He also pointed out that private prosecutor Rambo Tumapa did not oppose his motion.

A former ally of the late strongman ferdinand Marcos, Pacificador ran for congressman in the lone district of the province in 1995 but finished third behind Javier Plaridel and Javier.

FOR BACKGROUND, A13

DAY AFTER POLLS
Tension as counting starts

SAFEKEEPING
Efforts to protect ballots take different forms like a soldier riding on one in Cotabato City at the start of vote-counting early Monday. (Jaime Zamora Gomez)

Polls become big gamble in Mindanao

GAMBLERS and their supporters in Mindanao considered keeping watch over the results of their biggest gamble, running for elective posts, amid reports of cheating and as a group of financiers in Oroquieta City grabbed the chance to start a gambling junket over the election results.

But in some parts of the region, the wait for the results has increased tension.

In Tubuan, Basilan, followers of reelectionist Mayor Dato Rahdad prevented a ballot box and the municipal district of official ballots in the Lower Sinangkapan Elementary School at 9:15 a.m.

The suspect, Hadja Farma Sali, said she merely acted the election materials against armed men who were arriving at that time. The armed men were alleged followers of reelection candidate Hadjirata Jamin Sr.

"I did not want to steal (the ballots). I just protested the ballot box and the ballots," Sali told the military and members of the Board of Election Inspectors.

The ballots were declared null and void.

In Siargao, Surigao del Norte, unidentified men fired at the house of village chief Oscar Amoin in Barangay Dapa early yesterday. Amoin is a supporter of reelectionist Mayor Alma Navarro.

No one was hurt.

Rey Sumalipao, election supervisor for Lanao del Sur, has recommended that failure of elections be declared in the towns of Lumbatan, Bubong, Lumbayanague and Saduc Dimaukomang.

Sumalipao said he made the recommendation because of indiscriminate firing of guns, hamstrung vote-counting machines and the presence of "ghost voters."

FOLLOW, A14

Delayed polls, slow count in South Luzon

EFFECTS of the counting of the votes have ended in most provinces yesterday, with thousands of votes in the vital Southern Luzon provincial board members Rhoderic Cadiao and Felix Oyardo.

Even in Metro, Laguna went to their respective polling precincts at 7 a.m. yesterday to accomplish their duties of Catalogue denied his claims that he be allowed to attend the activity.

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FOLLOW, A14

Central, Northern Luzon bets trade fraud charges

DUPAX DEL SUR, Nueva Vizcaya—Three ballot boxes were snatched allegedly by the reelectionist mayor in the remote village of Binanggan in Dupax del Norte town on Tuesday dawn, according to a report reaching the military here.

Col. Gary Martinez, commanding officer of the Army's 84th Infantry Battalion, said the report indicated that Dupax del Norte Mayor Irene Atienzo and three men took the ballot boxes from three precincts at the Binanggan Elementary School at 1:30 a.m. Tuesday.

According to witnesses who asked not to be identified, Atienzo, allegedly armed with a .45 cal. and accompanied by three men, fired his gun before he entered the premises and ordered he men to take the ballot boxes.

The group headed these into Atienzo's Montero and 1,000 pesos in their left.

When contacted for comment, Atienzo denied the allegations. He said the charges were concocted by his political rivals.

But Atienzo said he received reports that armed men took the ballot boxes from the precincts in Barangay Binanggan.

Members of Dupax del Norte's board of election inspectors and Atienzo, a candidate of the Lakas-CMD, alighted from his vehicle and poked his gun at Sandy Whapes, a coordinator for the Lakas ng Demokratikong Pilipinas party in the area.

Reports said Atienzo seized Whapes of holding a ballot box from a precinct in Sitio Dupax.

Senator Sapa Pelle Caddali, provincial police director, on Tuesday asked the police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group to conduct an independent inquiry amid the unsubstantiated allegations of a cover up by the local police.

Tiong polls

The election in Tiong town in Mina and the islands towns of Cabayan in Cagayan pushed through on Monday following improved weather conditions.

Power outages were reported in Pigcit City, Baguio City, Banaue in Ifugao and some parts of Tuguegarao on Monday night and Tuesday morning as the counting and canvassing of votes were ongoing.

In Pangasinan, three election officers in Urdaneta City were beat when their wards was hit by a delivery van midnight of Monday.

Election officers Victoria Gamilla, Jean Ann and Jesse Lopez were delivering a ballot box to the Comelec office in the city when the accident occurred.

In Bulacan, a passenger jeep loaded with food packs for the poll watchers and supporters of reelectionist Malolos City Mayor Danilo Domingo was hijacked by still unidentified suspects on Monday night.

In Mina, police officials in the province reported no outbreak of violence during the counting of votes.

Before the elections, the Mina police recorded several cases of election-related killings and harassment of supporters of rival political camps.

Col. Noel Ilalaog, commander of the Army's 41st Infantry Battalion, and Senior Supt. Alexander Mabua, assistant the generally peaceful conduct of the elections in Mina to the vigilance of his enlisted.

Power outage

Power outages and a chaotic pattern partially hampered the ballot counting in Baguio City and some provinces of the Cordillera.

The Philippine Information Agency-Cordillera reminded reports that electricity in several Ifugao villages was cut off on Monday, although the electric cooperative there blamed the National Power Corp. for the power outages.

On Tuesday morning, power was cut off in downtown Baguio. The National Movement for Free Elections complained the counting to await the restoration of power.

Police set up checkpoints around the ballot counting area in the Baguio Convention Center as a precaution against saboteurs and election fraud.

Tartas tension

In Tarlac, tension rose in San Manuel town as the Comelec proclaimed reelectionist Mayor Reynaldo Eduardo reinstated 1,173 votes.

Malacañang, Benjamin Reyes, and his supporters protested the victory by claiming massive cheating. Reyes, who was actuated on Monday together with some supporters for possessing firearms, received 24,892 votes. Tarlac was also in part held.

The Comelec also proclaimed Rosario Adolfo as winner in the city mayoral race with 4,750 votes.

In Pampanga, more than 1,000 supporters of mayoral candidate Dave Tawagan massed up in front of the Apalit town hall to protest alleged election cheating.

The Namfrel in Apalit reported that at least 8,979 registered voters in the town were not able to vote because their names were not in the computerized voters' list. At least 41,546 voters voted.

According to the Namfrel, the actual persons were only 220.

FOLLOW, A-11

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SOUNder

Baguio mayor concedes defeat

BAGUIO CITY—Re-electionist Mayor Bernardo Vergara conceded on Tuesday to rival Councilor Braulio Yaranon, following an upset in exit poll results here.

Vergara met Yaranon at a hotel here at 1 p.m. Wednesday to relay his decision to accept defeat.

As of 4 p.m. Wednesday, the Bantay Movement for Free Elections (BFE) showed that Yaranon got 2,742 votes while Vergara received 1,389. Rambol had received 130 votes, with 40 out of 712 Baguio precincts. The city has 139,000 registered voters.

Both Vergara and Yaranon conducted a hectic campaign.

Vergara, a former Baguio representative running for his second term as mayor this year, said the public "misunderstood all his good intentions because of the campaign. Yet [he] decided with resilience to judge the merits of his leadership in the city.

Vergara, an engineer and former general manager of the Philippine Tourism Authority, had been criticized here for initiating massive infrastructure projects. Most of the campaign controversies have developments projects.

He said he is hoping for a majority vote in the city council for his Tingguian a Baguio partymates to ensure the surge of his projects would be continued.

Among these projects is the P8-million reforestation Burnham Road and the Marcos Highway to downtown Baguio.

Yaranon, a former regional trial court judge, is 77 years old. Vincent Cabreros, *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Counting tension starts

Turn to page A-17

ted not 537 as the Comelec reported. Eleven results in 182 precincts had been tallied.

Six ill Boys who served as the Board of Election Inspectors surrenders.

Reinstatement also ordered Hidalgo town on Monday night and in the City of San Fernando on Tuesday morning. The counting of votes took six to 10 hours in Batch, local election officials said.

Reports from Nes Banares-Roxas, Melvin Gascon, Ben Moses Rivera, Emmanuel Galvez, Juliet Cristobal, Aviña Rita Paredes, Reena Rencilla, Fabunan Sotelo-Fuertes, Dindar Cabrias, Vincent Cabreros, Jaded Balaba and Thea Seth Agbayani, *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and* Jennie Sivino, Gerardo Reyes, Jo Clemente *and* Analiza Roque, *PDI Central Luzon Bureau*

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

After Jon Barnhardt
Aurora City/Malandeth B. Fernandez

Old photos reveal how Japanese built Baguio

By Vincent Cabreza
Baguio City

THE BAGUIO City covered with pine trees and the 8-degree Centigrade mornings live on the pages of a Japanese newsletter called "Pandesal."

It brings numbing recollections of a city that was designed by American rulers from colonial government initiated the reins of administration over the islands from the Spaniards in the early 1900s.

"Pandesal" is also one of a few Japanese publications that keeps of a Baguio that was built by Japanese carpenters, masons and traders, as portrayed in black-and-white photographs collected by its owners, Shobunsha-based photographer Shunsuke Tsukada Tsuruya.

Tsuruya's collection of 400 vintage photographs is featured in a new coffee-table book, "Japanese Pioneers in the Northern Philippine Highlands," produced by Baguio scholars of Japanese descent.

The book pays homage to the Japanese architects who went to improve on help build the Benguet Road: from the Kennon Road I, the three significant engineering feats that span the Cordillera mountains of Mountain, in 1903. Many of the Japanese stayed and lived in the city until the end of World War II.

The book's editor, Patricia Cibulo Abilde, assistant director of natural history at the Intramuros Institution in Washington D.C., said many of the novel lections that comprised "Japanese Pioneers" were visited that would never have been found.

"Few scientists in this world would pay homage to ... carpenters, tenants, farmers, overall workers and traders. He never remember our vast exposure. We would probably remember our carpenters, but never our carpenters," she said.

Beginnings

But these carpenters shared stories that date "the very beginnings of Baguio and of the Cordillera."

Abilde said many schools, bridges and houses in the towns of Cervantes (Ilocos Sur), Bontoc (Mt. Province) and Lubuagan (Kalinga) were built by Japanese workers who spread out to the Cordillera.

Former's father, Shunsuke, managed the Photo Studio, which survives today as a thriving "old Baguio" establishment, and collected about 300 prints of Japanese life on "foreign land."

About 100 of these photographs were taken by my father, Shunsuke, and those include an image of my old house in Baguio. I was born in 8089 Center Hospital (in 1932). I am a Baguio boy," Kinosuke Bodolfo Tsuruya said through an interpreter.

The 1938 photograph drew the attention of many old timers because Tsuruya's house was one of several shops on Session Road, the main street in the central business district. It shows a section of the Pines Studio, which was alongside the Japanese Bazaar, described as one of the largest retailers of the bustling mining town.

Beside the bazaar was the office of a newspaper called El Nono.

Some of the Tsuruya collections portray Japanese families in their family best, in front of the Presidential Mansion.

Visible at the backdrop of one of the pictures is "the distinctive 1911 stonework of Felicisima manor, Felicisima Lane," which is still a unique view of today's mansion, the President's house in the summer capital.

THE JAPANESE theater on Session Road, Baguio City, in the late 1910s, owned by Hideo Hayakawa. This photo was taken from the book, "Japanese Pioneers in the Northern Philippine Highlands: A Centennial Tribute (1903-2003)."

A photograph reveals Rudolfo Jaguesar "parent" while serving for the famous 1930s poet Reyes Rudolfo presents one of his pieces at the Empire Hotel.

Burnham Lake

Another Tsuruya photograph depicts a rather large Burnham Lake, minus the extensive reclamations and tailings. The photo features a Japanese woman wearing the kimono.

"Japanese Pioneers" was launched on May 1, seven days after the 59th anniversary of Baguio's liberation from the Japanese Imperial wing at the end of World War II.

Tsuruya said the Japanese residents were ramped out in the forests of Benguet, when the Japanese forces set up headquarters at Camp John Hay.

War veterans have always expressed that the Japanese military one more than just symbolic unity in uniting their high command there.

Towards the end of the "wider tyranny period of war" in 1945, Tsuruya said he and his neighborhood friends were sent back to Japan. But they brought along several memories of the "pandesal" they always had for breakfast.

Many of his friends have since returned for a pilgrimage to Baguio, Tsuruya said. Many more allowed Tsuruya to note their family portraits, and a few of his childhood friends gave him their stories about the old Baguio that was more cosmopolitan than American.

Kennon Road

The Japanese were among a multitude of races brought by American engineers to build the famous road.

Perhaps some of the poignant photographs are of "the zigzag" after 1903.

Road girders and Japanese workers were laid bare by Ilocanos like Tuyuyu and Mankilopis Yamato, a carpenter who toiled on famous line who later embarked on a career as a commercial photographer in Laguna, Mt. Province.

Shunsuke had compiled the testimonies of his fellow Japanese migrants for a year's book, which Tsuruya rediscovered at a collector's shop years later.

Kennon's construction was filled with scandal at its inception in 1903, prompting a United States congressional investigation after the road was completed. It was finally abandoned in 1906, but was eventually used as a major route to the city.

The government had been on the brink of abandoning the road again for its engineering flaws, but it became operational after the July 16, 1990 earthquake hit Baguio and caused damages.

Tsuruya said stories about the former road's abandonment agitated many of the Baguio-born Japanese, "I know [the road's history changes], and his wife at always grumbles, but I would cry if they completely abandon the road," he said.

"Too many Japanese died, and sacrificed their own lands (back to Japan) to rebuild this road." With a report from Norman Cabrera

Delayed polls, slow count in Southern Luzon

From page A-17

tant in Legaspi City.

In Calamari, Laguna, the counting of votes was suspended several times because of too much noise inside the canvassing area. Canvassing began only at 2 a.m. yesterday and resumed from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 11 noon to 2 p.m., ending in a total of 14 precincts canvassed out of 119 precincts as of 2 p.m. yesterday.

In Santa Olivas, precinct count of Sen. Isidro Lidasalan Pimentel and a Nantiful Cainsan volunteer, tried only two cases in which there were discrepancies in the tally and the actual number written on a statement of votes form.

In San Isidro, Laguna, Nantiful rival Stalin Cassandra observed that 10 members did not seem prepared enough for their duties. Some election officer Felipanio Sinchil confirmed that the BEI lacked training and knowledge." He said 60 of 200 precincts had already been scanned as of press time.

Cassandra said they had only been able to count 30 percent of the election returns because of problems with the new system of counting, which included testing tested of 5 mail and his only.

In Batole, Cabanbe City, many of those who were not able to vote because of lack of ballots staged a mini protest early morning the Comelec to suspend the elections locally. The election, however, resumed after lunch when more ballots arrived.

The tension worsened when supporters of the rival of Batangas mayoral candidate Apollo Apollar were caught by police illegally carrying firearms during election day.

Mariano Delos SPO1 Plata confirmed that four of the supporters of mayoral candidate Lorenzo Pedro were preempted for violating the Omnibus Election Code.

Plata said the situation is now under control while the canvassing of votes at the town plaza was ongoing. He said police were in full alert to maintain peace and order and the successful conduct and completion of the elections. Reports: Rene Juan Eusebio Jr., Ed Francis Bermejo, Ronnie Zamora and Clarice Celeng, PIA Southern Luzon Bureau

TEACHERS wait at a staircase in Lucena City as they await their turn to cast elections in the city.

Polls become big gamble in Mindanao...

From page A-1

ment, intimidation of voters, lack of uniform and general election personnel in the towns.

Brig. Gen. Proceres Gudani, commander of the 1st Marine Brigade Landing Team and head of Joint Task Force Basilio, said his soldiers also arrested a man who fired a .45 cal. pistol during the elections.

Two minors were also caught trying to cast but were later released.

Allegations of vote-buying and flying voters plagued the elections.

"Cracking" at some precincts was also reported.

However, the Lanao Sur elections were still considered peaceful despite tension in certain towns due to the intense rivalry between supporters of local mayoral candidates.

Lanao Sur is under Comelec control and 377 Marine soldiers have been sent there to assist as Board of Election Inspectors in 12 towns and Marawi City.

In Ozamiz City, most members in a line of the illegal gambling numbers, a lottery-type gambling emerged from the electoral exercise.

Gambling is processed by making a guess how many candidates from among three political parties would land seats in the city council.

There are three groups: local #4, Lakas-CMD, and one for independent candidates.

The local #4 group has seven candidates, all incumbents; Lakas-CMD has 13, and there are seven independent candidates.

The number combinations go-

A MORTAR shell found in a bus terminal in Davao City doesn't help any in easing the tension of the coming process. Showing reporters the mortar shell was Lt. Col. Ghio Mazzara.

round from each group come sold up to 10, the total number of the second combination for guess.

The combination runs similar to the following patterns: local #4 for "local," Lakas-CMD for "multi-lite" and Independent for "Lali."

In placing a bet, each combination costs a better P20. A better can place as much bet as one wants, but for bonus he wants in the same area as a better can also bet on as many combinations as he wants.

Each bet represents a number for draw to the pot money generated by the totality of bets.

Winning bets are determined after official results of canvassing by the Commission on Elections (Comelec), which would take some three days.

Interesting stat's winnings will be on a winner-take-all basis, as a winning, there who placed the correct combinations combination will divide among themselves the pot money.

Of the pot money, 30 percent goes to the organizer as administrative cost.

The division of pot money will be based on the amount of shares, that is, the total bets one placed for a certain number combination.

According to Mark Pecinos, a former close town city councilor, he conceived of the number's game as a means of "making fun" out of the "very hot" election climate.

Pecinos said the numbers game was primarily designed to raise funds for a relative who is running a campaign for an elective post.

But when his friends learned about it, they got excited and wanted to join or start their own, he said.

Pecinos even made a one-page "tip" on which he outlined six possible combinations. The tip, he said, are not to be forgotten given of the natural "regardless of presence or absence of electoral fraud."

The business learned that betting closed until morning of May 11, just before the first round of Hundred tabulated results were reached today.

The closing of bets was timed to prevent bettors from taking advantage of the latest standings based on botched figures.

Betting was observed to be brisk during the campaign hours since the numbers game broadcast motorcade convoys on the prospects of candidates.

But betting peaked as soon as partial results from precincts were announced in radio stations.

Another gambling scheme reportedly betting is ongoing is one who will place 10th in the race for a city council seat.

In San Jose, Lanao del Norte, betting is also ongoing to take among three leading vice-mayoral candidates will be declared winners based on the leading numbers.

Three gambling schemes only how much Filipinos can make fun out of a dimly serious socio-political matter as an election. Ryan E. Rosauro, Ric Ondrosa Agustin, Alex S. Allgacio and Franklin Caligold, PDI Bhe-dorian Baronia

Pacificador takes lead over rivals in Antique elections...

From page A-17

He also fumed third in 2001 when he ran for governor against Salvadora Perez and Exequiel Perez and Dominic Marfil.

The day after elections elsewhere in the Visayas was peaceful although charges of fraud and cheating were widespread.

In Roxas City, the head of the Parliamentary Penal Justice for Progress and Movement 1992-2001 for Western Visayas has filed charges against a village official for vote buying.

Joseph Arapido, a lawyer, said he filed the case against Severino Brin, a kagawad of Imarayan Inan-Arnaldo Village here, at the Commission on Election (Comelec) in Manila at about 3:30 p.m. yesterday.

Influence

He said he wanted to make sure that the case would not be influenced by local politicians, especially since Brin was an ally of Roxas City Mayor Antonio del Rosario.

Arapido submitted a big brown envelope containing 31 small white envelopes that contained P150 each and a complete ballot of the administration candidates for the national and local levels.

Also attached in the complaint was a list of voters who allegedly received and were about to receive the supposed envelopes containing the money and the administration candidates' ballots.

Brin denied the accusations and claimed that the lawyer was harassing him for political reasons.

Arapido claimed that he saw Brin outside a voting precinct at the Inan-Arnaldo Village Elementary School, distributing white envelopes containing money and sample ballots of the administration candidates.

He said he had told Brin to stop, which the village official heeded. But later, he added he saw some voters holding envelopes containing P150 in each and the administration sample ballots.

He said he asked one of the voters who told him that the envelopes came from Brin who was then inside a restaurant adjacent to the city police station and about 50 meters from the school.

Arapido said he then rushed to the restaurant and saw Brin allegedly distributing white envelopes to some people.

He pointed out Dan Chief Insp. Wilmonino Bongais, Roxas police chief, who were inside the restaurant at that time.

In fact, he said, he even told Bongais "Chief, akon na lang itna nanan-an (Chief, can I stop this disorder?)"

Brin only stopped when photographers, radio reporters and cameramen from the two radio companies in Capiz moved to arrive, said Arapido.

As Brin was about to leave, he tried to discreetly hand over a big brown envelope containing the smaller white envelopes and his co-workers were by holding him.

Since he was near Brin, Arapido said he grabbed the brown envelope, which he said he would use as evidence against Brin. With reports from Gerry T. Magbalosa and Felipe Celino, PIA Visayas Bureau

POLICE dog of the Western Police District K-9 unit guards ballot boxes for canvassing at the Mikey Arroyo Stadium in Manila.

SWS exit poll says GMA defeating Poe by 9 points

SLEEPLESS at the Quezon City Hall while waiting for election returns, a Comelec representative tries to catnap.

Namfrel's partial and unofficial tally covered 409 precincts, representing 0.2 percent of the 210,202 total precincts nationwide.

Mr Macapagal was also ahead in the quick count that ABS-Information Systems conducted for "Halalan 2004," the coverage of the elections by GMA 7, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inq7.net, PLDT Smart, Catholic Media Network, dzBB, Sun Media Inc. and PCIJ.

As of 5:02 p.m. yesterday, the last count with 0.6 percent left to run, Mr Macapagal had 553,369 votes; Poe, 340,118; Larazo, 248,421; Roco, 140,826; and, Villanueva, 129,091.

Johnny Ramos, vice president of ABS, said ABS-Comelec engine with the last tally yesterday "by give way to the official count of the Comelec." Ramos said the quick count covered 13,699 precincts and a total of 1,414,811 votes.

In the 1998 exit poll, Mr Macapagal polled more votes but trailed in the Visayas and Mindanao, where he got 62 percent and 59 percent of the votes, respectively.

Poe had 21 percent of the votes in the Visayas and 23 percent in Mindanao. The actor beat Ms Macapagal in Luzon outside Metro Manila. Poe had 39 percent while Mr Macapagal had 24 percent in Southern Luzon. In North Luzon and Laguna, Poe got 32 percent compared with the President's 22 percent.

Si Meto Manila, the President was also ahead of her rivals, getting 31 percent of the votes, followed by Poe with 23 percent, Larazo got 10 percent, Villanueva, 10 percent; and, Roco, 6 percent.

Victory would give Ms Macapagal her first real mandate to lead the country after three years of only partly successful efforts to tackle corruption, insurgencies, huge debts, pervasive poverty and a weak economy.

The President, a US-trained economist, had the support of big business, charismatic Christian groups and much of the political elite as the campaigned largely on her track record and Poe's inexperience.

The peso and Manila stocks opened sharply lower, although they was partly a reaction to a global market slide on Monday (Related story on Page B8 /)

Investors offloaded yesterday until than waived interest on May they was about 72 to 80 percent, lower than previous turnouts in presidential elections which reached 85 percent.

Commissioner Resurreccion Borra said the figure was a conservative estimate based on talks with election officers.

Commissioner Manuel Barcelona told reporters that 70 percent of the voters cast their votes in Region IX.

He said the turnout was 65 to 75 percent in the two Zamboanga provinces, 65 to 70 percent in Basilan, 75 percent in Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, 70 to 80 percent in Bukidnon and 60 to 65 percent in Agusan del Sur. Enrique del Rosario had a voter turnout of 85 percent while Surigao del Sur had 66 percent turnout, according to the latest. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana, Marvin P. Mendiola and Inquirer*

8 K-4, 4 KNP bets lead in Senate race

ROXAS

REVILLA

CAYETANO

Raghuladasang Pilipino who made it were re-elections senator Ignacio Pimentel Jr., Sonny Madrigal and Jinggoy Estrada, the son of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada.

Pitchin ortiberg director of the top 12 were 8-4 reelectionist senator John Osmeña and Alfredo Lim of the opposition.

The poll of 4,627 voters across the country from an estimated voter turnout of 85.3 percent had a margin of error of 1.5 percent.

The standings of the leading candidates in the 1995 poll each as follows: Roxas, 45 percent; Arroyo, 45 percent; Guingona, 35 percent and Madrigal tied at 32 percent; Santiago, 31 percent; Estrada, Gordon and Lapid tied at 30 percent; Barbers, 28 percent; and Revilla and Enrile tied at 27 percent.

Partial and unofficial quick counts of the National Movement for Free Elections, the GMA 7-ABS-CBN Consortium's quick count, and ABS-CBN-911 quick count showed Roxas maintaining a comfortable lead over other candidates from the 8-4 coalition.

As of 5:53 p.m. yesterday, the standings in the "Halalan 2004" of the GMA 7-ABS quick count were as follows: Roxas, 3,413,861; Gordon, 821,899; Cayetano, 764,800; Pimentel, 760,999; and Enrile, 739,016.

Completing the "magic 12" were Lim, Madrigal, Revilla, Ibnet, Santiago, Marcelo and Lapid.

Among the opposition candidates, the results were surprising for Madrigal, who lost when she ran for senator in 2001, and the young Estrada who is a concejal of his father on playoff charges and is only on output.

The celebrities, Pimentel and Enrile, were consistent in placing among the leading 12 in the SWS exit poll and the other quick count operations.

In an interview, Pimentel said it was still anybody's guess as far as the national elections were concerned.

"I still worry about fraudulent operations being launched by the Comelec against us. I was told, but have yet to confirm it, that Comelec commissioner Virgilio Garcillano who is supposed to have been assigned to Southern Luzon is said to be operating in the Armamentan People in Muslim Mindanao. And that is my worst is an ominous development," said Pimentel.

He said that Garcillano was "supposed to have been instrumental" in the dagdag-bawas (vote padding and cheating) in the 1998 and previous elections.

Pimentel said three if ENP presidential candidates Fernando Poe Jr. would win by a large margin, the votes in the Senate race would be 8-4, in favor of the KNP.

"The worst case is 6-6," said Pimentel who named Madrigal, Lim, Estrada, Enrile, Ibnetk and Estrada the opposition's strongest candidates.

"We are still highly expectant of victory. And I'm very embossed over the results of the South African overseas weekend vote, because there were 12 who voted, and I got 11," he quipped.

WEDNESDAY
MAY 12, 2010

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SPORTS

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Pacquiao arrives tomorrow

Manila to roll out red carpet for boxing hero; Muhammad readies protest

By Solvin L. Lagumbay, Contributor

HIS reputation intact following a thunderous split decision with WBA and IBF featherweight champ Juan Manuel Marquez in Saturday's Las Vegas, Nevada, bout, Manny Pacquiao returns to a hero's welcome in Manila tomorrow still steaming from what he believes is a ringside robbery.

Pacquiao, fighting for undisputed of victory in the championship clash, flies home on a Philippine Airlines flight from San Francisco still a hero among his 10 million countrymen.

Fight panelists in Las Vegas and majority of the ringside reporters only scored at the MGM Grand Arena, where the event's most riveting fight was held, believed Pacquiao got the raw end of the deal from at least one of the fight judges.

Yesterday, his American promoter, Murad Muhammad, proposed a formal protest before the Nevada State Athletic Commission as well as the World Boxing Association and the International Boxing Federation, which both sanctioned the bout.

Muhammad said there were three grounds for the protest: the first-round scoring error admitted by Judge Burt Clements, the long count administered by referee Joe Cortez when Marquez hit the canvas for the third time in the first round, and the failure of Cortez to deduct a point from Marquez, who received six warnings during the bout due to low blows.

Meanwhile, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza said he will roll out the red carpet for the fighter when he arrives tomorrow. He said he will accompany Pacquiao, whom he considers a counterpart, to Malacañang Palace for an audience with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Atienza himself will lead the welcome party at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport for the featherweight acknowledged as the world's best.

With Inquirer wires

Suico eyes Morales tiff in SA fight

ORIENTAL and Pacific Boxing Federation (OPBF) super featherweight champ Wendy Suico seeks to follow in Manny Pacquiao's footsteps when he fronts Mzonke Fana in a WBC eliminator fight in South Africa this month.

Suico, still undefeated in 11 fights with 10 knockouts, takes on the World Boxing Council's No. 1 contender in the mandatory fight, the winner of which wins the right to challenge Rusty WBC titleholder Eddi Mendez.

The Suico-Fana 12-rounder will be held at the Orlando Community Hall in Soweto, South Africa.

The Filipino has been undergoing extensive training since May 4 at the Tokyo Gym in Japan of Akihiko Honda, one of Asia's most influential promoters.

Suico said his small entourage including Japanese manager Ito Kotomi, are slated to fly to South Africa on May 16.

"I am going all out for this fight because I'm fighting on foreign territory," said Suico in a recent interview at the AIA Gym in Cebu.

Suico is currently ranked No. 2 by the WBC, a step behind Fana who boasts a 21-2-win-loss record with 8 KOs.

Suico defended his OPBF crown on Jan. 30, stopping South Korean Baek Seung Woo in the second round at the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel. Andrew L. Lagumbay, contributor

METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Manday

SUERTRES 4 2 9
SIX DIGIT (No winners yesterday)
5 4 7 3 4 9

6/42 Lotto
4 6 11 18 20 40
Vis-Min
6 17 25 33 35 36

AMA QUICK COUNT

Joey concedes; Alma doing badly

By the Metro Staff

OUTSIDE: Mayor Joey Marquez, who is currently running for Congress, conceded defeat yesterday in his rival, former National Security Adviser Roilo Golez.

Marquez, interviewed by phone yesterday, said he believed the votes in Parañaque's second district already made clear their preference after he saw the results of the tallies from the precincts.

Golez lead

As of yesterday's partial and unofficial count by the National Movement of Free Elections (Namfrel) released at 3:15 p.m., Golez had 77,781 votes, while Marquez only had 63,621. The votes for six other aspirants got zero to 49 votes.

"I think the people have spoken and I respect their decision," he said yesterday. "Maybe the people are not ready for me to be a legislator. But I would continue with my public service."

The Parañaque mayor, who is on his third and last term, said he already congratulated Golez and had offered him his full support.

Alma trails

His campaign aide, Alma Moreno, who is running for Parañaque mayor, was also doing badly in another partial and unofficial tally.

According to the quick count being conducted by the AMA Education System, Moreno, whose name appeared as "Alma L. Marquez" in her certificate of candidacy, only had 2,930 votes as against the 12,870 votes counted for retired Maj. Odiong.

Another aspirant, Florencio Bermejo, was behind Odiong and ahead of Moreno with 8,668 votes.

Calooocan's Malonzo

Based on AMA's tally, Reynaldo Malonzo, another third-term mayor who is also seeking a congressional post, was also trailing in the initial count for Caloocan City's First district.

As of 5:00 p.m. yesterday, Malonzo had 2,597 votes, which is nearly half of the votes of leading candidate Oscar Malapitan, who had 4,229 votes.

Malapitan's wife, Gwendolyn, was behind the pack of mayoral aspirants in Caloocan.

Gwendolyn, who had garnered 4,094 votes, was trailing behind tally/Team runners Enrico Echiverri who had 8,471 votes; Edgar Erice (6,868); and Macario Asistio Jr. (6,728).

Reelectionists

Also according to the 5:51 p.m. partial tally of AMA, six reelectionist mayors in Metro Manila were ahead in the count in their respective localities.

These reelectionist mayors and their closest rivals are:

- Jose Atienza of Manila who had 78,852 votes as against that of Godofredo Lopez's 38,389 votes.
- Imelda Aguilar of Las Piñas (20,020) against Benjamin Gonzales (9,941).
- Jaime Fresnedi of Muntinlupa (1,755) against Edwin Musngisngis (11,384).
- Lourdes Binay of Makati (32,357) against Ernesto Bay (31,047).
- Feliciano Belmonte of Quezon City (79,307) against Ismael Mathay Jr. (23,326); and,
- Joseph Victor Ejercito of San Juan (13,900) against Estrella Jose (2,691).

Of the contenders, Lopez and Mathay are former mayors who are trying to make a comeback.

"I am expecting to win. Contrary to what others were claiming, we have the numbers that it would be a tight fight between us," Belmonte told the bosses.

Performance did it

The incumbent cited his performance as the reason for his confidence.

"I'm confident because I have performance as my edge. People see my accomplishments and the changes during my term [as they voted for me]," Belmonte said.

He added that he intended to continue serving the people of Quezon City.

Although seeing from initial results that he was behind Belmonte, Mathay was not about to concede.

"We'll see," he said in a phone interview. "I have yet to see the final result."

Turnout blamed

Mathay attributed the apparent low number of votes he has to the low voter turnout.

He said many people failed to cast their votes on Monday because they could not find their names in the Computerized Voters' List.

Lopez and Atienza had faced off in 1988, where Lopez won by a load of some 200,000 votes. He served as mayor until 1992.

Lopez's brother, Jim, later lost to Atienza when the present incumbent won the mayoralty in 1998, in the same election. Atienza edged out former Sen. Fransisco Macoda, who is now vying for a Senate seat.

Atienza spent Alfredo Lim, also a senatorial candidate this election, and former Manila representative Amado Bagatsing, in his 2001 reelection.

Atienza's early lead did not worry Lopez, as he described the mayoralty "a tight race."

In a statement, Lopez said he was not going to concede to Atienza.

Cornelio proclamation

"Let's allow the Comelec to do the counting first and see who gets proclaimed as mayor," Lopez said.

In the mayoral race in Muntinlupa City, third-term Rep. Nerpal Cornelio was ahead in the AMA count with 12,223 votes with his closest rival Angelyn Ibazo having 6,189 votes.

It can be recalled that current Mayor Jaime Aznar gave up a bid for his third and last term to allow Golez to run for mayor.

Instead, Aznar is running to take over the congressional post to be vacated by Cornelio.

According to the Namfrel quick count at Muntinlupa as of 5 p.m. yesterday, Aznar was enjoying a wide lead over his closest rival Ibazo: Bonoan.

The votes for Aznar stood at 33,890, while that of Bonoan numbered only 16,379.

Abalos victor

Abalos said his entire ticket was doing well in the tabulations, save one candidate for councilor.

"Of the councilor slates [I...] would be 100 percent," he said.

In Pasig City, former Mayor Vicente "Eusing" Enrile was leading also in his bid to reclaim his post.

But the main rival, Rep. Roberto Lanot, said it was he who was winning.

"It's not a landslide. It's insurgency," Lanot said, describing his supposed victory.

Election officials yesterday declared available Namfrel figures on the Pasig tally thereby had 17,486 votes in his name, while Lanot had 17,129.

Fernando lead

Reelectionist Mayor Marides Lourdes Fernando of Marikina in the meantime, claimed she got around 80 percent of all the votes.

The leading, around 75-80," she told the Inquirer.

Figures provided by Namfrel as of 8:45 p.m. showed Fernando having 44,284 votes.

Jose Bernardo Nadrada had the next highest votes with 15,151.

But the race between congressional candidates Romeo "Gene" Candazo and Rep. Bel De Guzman was tight, she said.

"Which is why the results is a low keeper," she said.

The Namfrel count had 38,597 votes going to De Guzman and 37,118 votes going to Candazo.

Persons said her camp was set to ask the Comelec to declare a failure of elections in the city.

Int. chief power outages is "several hundred years" and "dimming" on the primary reasons.

AH UNIDENTIFIED cigarette vendor does business as workers prepare a tally board outside the Pinoy Aquino Stadium in Manila. The tally board will show the results of the just concluded elections for local posts.

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

ELECTION 2004

AMA
Quick Count (Partial, Unofficial)
11 May 2004, as of 5:43 p.m.

CALOOCAN CITY

Congressman (District 1)
1 Malapitan, Oscar S. 4229
2 Malonzo, Reynaldo O. 2597
3 Echiverri, Enrico 8471
4 Corvillo, Salvacion B. 533
5 Gandeza, Mauro Jr. R. 59

Congressman (District 2)
1 Asistio, Luis A.
2 Erice, Edgar J.
3 Del Mundo, Rosalino Jr. M.

Mayor
1 Echiverri, Enrico R. 8471
2 Erice, Edgar N. 6868
3 Asistio, Macario Jr. A. 6728
4 Malonzo, Oscarlito C. 2930
5 Ong, Bernardino C. 339
6 Pinol, Enrique Jr. G. 333

LAS PIÑAS CITY

Congressman
1 Aguilar Vitas Cynthia A. 10923
2 Olivarez, Antonio Miguel J. 7845
3 Bustamante, Nestor S. 1119

Mayor
1 Aguilar, Imelda T. 10038
2 Carbungco, Bernardo P. 1135
3 Antonino, Francisco Jr. A. 1116
4 Tolosa, Florencio B. 643
5 Flores, Leonardo C. 636

MAKATI CITY

Congressman (District 1)
1 Binay, Mary Email T.
2 Locsin, Teodoro L. Jr.

Congressman (District 2)
1 Aquino, Agustin S.
2 Mercado, Antonio G.

Mayor
1 Binay, Jejomar C. 32267
2 Trillo, Ely M. 4754
3 De Peña, Renato M. Jr. 1788
4 Hernando, Romeo T. 381

MALABON CITY

Congressman
1 Oreta, Roberto T.
2 Larson, Conrado J.
3 Sandoval, Federico E.E.

Mayor
1 Oreta, Canuto S.
2 Sandoval, Jaime M.
3 Rojo, Benjamin A. T.
4 Fabroa, Mark Allan Jay S.

MANDALUYONG CITY

Congressman
1 Abalos, Benjamin Jr. DC
2 Domingo, Francis Jr. A.
3 Lacson, Joseph B.
4 Smith, Inte E.

Mayor
1 Benitez, Ronald H. 10303
2 Lopez, Angelo C. 6139
3 Abalos, Jovencio S. 4035
4 Calilio, Benedicto M. 336

CITY OF MANILA

Congressman (District 1)
1 Lagdameo, Alfredo F.
2 Nieto, Ernesto A.
3 Bunuan, Rodolfo S.

Congressman (District 2)
1 Lacson, Manuel M.
2 Yaret, Amado C.
3 Mendoza, Robert Benz B.

Congressman (District 3)
1 Angeles, Jerry
2 Rivera, Miles M.

Congressman (District 4)
1 Nieto, Rolando C.
2 Bagatsing, Bernal D.
3 Gonzalez, Jose Jr. P.
4 Garcia, Jose R.

Congressman (District 5)
1 Atienza, Jaime C.
2 Macoda, Fransisco L.
3 Dimaporo, Gloria D.
4 Nuno, Joey D.

Congressman (District 6)
1 Bagatsing, Ramon Jr. B. 9481
2 Duenas, Rosenda Ann R. 7360
3 Reyes, Lucano M. 3179
4 Lagera, John Jr. L. 2789
5 Ocampo, Efren 1254
6 Bello, Roman F. 712
7 Sunga, Fernando P. 65
8 Lai, Conrad M. 58

Mayor
1 Atienza, Jose Jr. L. 78852
2 Lopez, Carmelino Jr. G. 38389
3 Cuna, Isla C. 562
4 Abad, Dindo S. 453
5 Gatus, Ashraf G. 388
6 Fernandez, Leonardo P. 101

MARIKINA CITY

Congressman
1 Cordero, Romeo DC
2 De Guzman, Bel R.
3 Candazo, Romeo C.
4 Rivera, Benedicto Luis A.

MUNTINLUPA CITY

Congressman
1 Bunoan, Rosanno Rufino B.
2 Bonoyan, Patricio Jr. L.
3 Fernandez, Aaron L.

Mayor
1 Fresnedi, Jaime DC 1755
2 Musngisngis, Elizabeth L. 1384
3 Dino, Rowelyn V. 980
4 Ballesteros, Pedro B. 93
5 Michaels, Dean A.

PARAÑAQUE CITY

Congressman
1 Bautista, Manuel A. S.
2 Matti, Jose Luis A. R.
3 Tolosa, Rob P.

Congressman (District 1)
1 Bautista, Roilo G. JR. 7800
2 Cacdac, Marcelino C.
3 Fenton, Wilfredo N.
4 Mary, Julius A. J.
5 Ferrolino, Rogelio A.
6 Veloso, Bernardo F.
7 Bernardino, Jose G.
8 Zuleta, Eduardo C.

Congressman (District 2)
1 Calaf, Rolly S.
2 Mangoni, Dennis B.
3 Bautista, Jesus P.
4 Bonoan, Eladio Jr. M.
5 Medina, Pedro C.

Mayor
1 Aguilar, Jaime H. 12078
2 Bautista, Florencio Jr. M. 8826
3 Mangoni, Vicente J. 6441
4 Ocampo, Jose V. 1139
5 Mary, Jose G. Jr. 1119
6 Cayco, Marcos B. 1112
7 Ferrer, Rodolfo 1
8 Muller, Ma. Luisa B. 58

PASAY CITY

Congressman
1 Cuneta-Pangilinan, Lucy G.
2 Guinigundo, Consuelo S.
3 Tan, Consuelo M.
4 Trinidad-Ong, Joan D.

Mayor
1 Antonio, Rosemary L.
2 Marcelo, Wenceslao D. Jr.
3 Peralta, Ruth Nanette T.
4 Santos, Ricardo E.
5 Tanchuling, Wenceslao B.

PASIG CITY

Congressman
1 Cruz-Sy, Soledad T. 11261
2 Jaworski, Reine Vincent Soto II 9761
3 Cunha, Jose M. 8553
4 Bernardo, Lorenzo 7389
5 Salvador, Dennis B. 553
6 Asuncion, Francis B. 388

Mayor
1 Eusebio, Vicente P. 16865
2 Lanot, Henry P. 16362
3 Bernardino, Dharlene B. 1156
4 Ortega, Victor Sr. 681
5 Ortega, Victor Jr. 377
6 Ignacio, Alexander C. 346
7 Evans, Edwin E. 124

QUEZON CITY

Congressman (District 1)
1 Crisologo, Vincent P. 8284
2 Pascual, Bernard 10766
3 Torres, Wilma S. 3120
4 Romero, Mardonio DC 1815
5 Samson, Marlon S. 1755
6 Guerrero, Arturo DC 258

Congressman (District 2)
1 Agunoli, Dalia Jr. S.
2 Jimenez, Walter Nicholas S.
3 Matias, Dominic F.
4 Mathay, Samuel H. Jr.
5 Soriano, Teresa S.
6 Suarez, Maryleen L.

Congressman (District 3)
1 Panlilio, Michael T. 9262
2 Defensor, Ma. Theresa T. 8088
3 Roja, Emmanuel D. 1852
4 Zaldarriaga, Anna Liza C.

Congressman (District 4)
1 Dela Llana, Ma. Victoria C.
2 Isidro, Jose L.
3 Nilo, Marcel C.
4 Tanday, Jesus C.

Mayor
1 Belmonte, Feliciano Jr. S. 78281
2 Mathay, Samuel Jr. A. 23326
3 Co, Antonio B. 7380
4 Mathay, Christian V.

MUNTINLUPA CITY

Congressman (District 1)
1 Bolante, Rustico F.
2 Carlos, Jose Emmanuel L.
3 Gatchalian, Reuben T.

Mayor
1 Lasala, Pedro H.
2 Bonoan, Eduardo M.
3 Tesoro, Cynthia B.

Mayor
1 Santiago, Warren T. 7826
2 Fernando, Rodriguez T. 2224
3 Conti, Margarito J. 1575

SAN JUAN

Congressman
1 Zamora, Ronaldo B.

Mayor
1 Zamora, Joseph Victor G. 13760
2 Ejercito, Estrella A. 9600
3 Manzano, Agustin G. 410

PATEROS TAGUIG

Congressman
1 Cayetano, Alan Peter S.
2 Florido, Gerardo S.
3 Garcia, Isidro B.

PATEROS

Mayor
1 Bonoan, Benjamin Jr. G.
2 Buenaventura, Willie C.
3 Lopez, Benjamin T.
4 Pintac, Rustico V.

TAGUIG

Mayor
1 Cabilo, Nene
2 Lobos-Alvarez, Ma. Lourdes
3 Quintero, Ferdinand
4 Vega, Sigfrido

VALENZUELA

Mayor
1 Marquez, Florido A.
2 Morales, Salvador G.
3 Vergara, Tobias M.

Post-poll cleanup starts

Fernando gives staff a week to do the job

MMDA personnel remove campaign posters from a wall along one of Manila's road streets.

By the Metro Staff

THE POST-ELECTIONS cleanup has begun.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday said he has given his personnel one week to clean up the metropolis of campaign pamphernalia.

Fernando said 2,000 members of the MMDA landscape and maintenance team were deployed starting yesterday to remove election posters, banners, leaflets and flyers.

He added that the MMDA personnel have been using water from dirty streams to remove poll materials from walls and poles.

"The function here (the water would run the street) and (cause the removal of the posters) after a few days," Fernando explained, adding that he learned the technique from some local chemists.

Fernando also appealed to Metro Manila residents to voluntarily clean up the areas near their houses.

In Pateros, MMDA dispatcher Moises Ato Pedro said around 15 MMDA personnel have begun cleaning the town from M. Almeda Street to San Joaquin.

More trash

"Mas grabe yung kalat ngayon kaysa noong national elections (This year's national elections produced more trash than the last elections)," Ato Pedro said.

In Quezon City, incumbent Mayor Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte said it is due to a 43-day ban on the usage of the huge areas created by the wild and chaotic race for public office.

While cleaning his bit by tearing down his own campaign posters and those of his rivals, Belmonte of the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats also urged other candidates to help clean up the environment.

"Hope other politicians will also help clean the areas. Those who run in the elections owe it to the people to restore order around," Belmonte told Inquirer. "I want to do my share in cleaning up the area and I want to set the example for other candidates to do the same."

Meanwhile, Manila's mountainous job left a busy city yesterday cleaning up the mess created by the elections.

They had to rid school grounds used as polling places of sample ballots, flyers, paper cups and other trash.

Cops urged to help

Policemen in Manila were encouraged to help in the cleaning of posters and streamers.

Western Police District spokesperson Chief Insp. Gerry Agrupis said that although it is not the task of the police to take down or remove the campaign materials, operatives in Manila could help if they want to. "It would be better if they could help as well, especially since we want to keep Manila clean."

Some residents were seen tearing down campaign posters in northern Metro Manila. Bates, which left the other day, had washed out some posters, but most had remained as walls and posts. — Marjorie Dirik, Jaybelyn Calalo, Desiree Sibug, Tina Santos, Mel Lawrence Achacoso, Nathalie Francisco, Christine Rondero, Inez Quintanilla, Antonia Amurao, Ed Yap, Lyric Salaverria, Edson Bacdayan Jr.

Debates, brownouts, security threats delay Metro canvass

By Luige del Puerto

THE LONG, and often agonizing, wait began for candidates and their supporters as canvassers resumed the manual tallying of the election returns yesterday.

Hindi nanaman nagawa ng canvassers Metro Manila ngunit late yesterday morning.

In San Juan, boxes of municipal election returns from San Juan Elementary School (Central) were supposed to arrive at 10 p.m., delaying the counting of votes.

A TV report said it arrived more or less at 10 p.m. but the canvassers in Pasay City had to begin their work on the election returns.

Ang mga boto ng Pasay ay dumating sa Pasay City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi, ayon sa isang TV report.

Sa Malabon, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Malabon Elementary School (Central) bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Valenzuela City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Valenzuela Sports Complex bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Caloocan City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Caloocan City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Quezon City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Quezon City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Marikina, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Marikina Elementary School bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Pasig City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Pasig City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Mandaluyong City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Mandaluyong City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa San Juan, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa San Juan Elementary School (Central) bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Pateros, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Pateros Elementary School (Central) bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Taguig City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Taguig City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Makati City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Makati City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Parañaque City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Parañaque City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Las Piñas City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Las Piñas City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Muntinlupa City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Muntinlupa City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Navotas City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Navotas City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

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Sa Parañaque City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Parañaque City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Las Piñas City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Las Piñas City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Muntinlupa City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Muntinlupa City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Navotas City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Navotas City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Power outage

In Marikina, a power outage hit the the Nangka Elementary School and the Old Village Elementary School around 10 p.m., delaying the counting of votes.

A TV report said it lasted more or less an hour.

Ang mga boto ng Marikina ay dumating sa Marikina City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi, ayon sa isang TV report.

Sa Marikina, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Marikina Elementary School bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Pasig City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Pasig City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Mandaluyong City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Mandaluyong City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa San Juan, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa San Juan Elementary School (Central) bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Pateros, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Pateros Elementary School (Central) bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Taguig City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Taguig City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Makati City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Makati City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Sa Parañaque City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Parañaque City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

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Sa Navotas City, nagsimula ang bilangan ng mga boto sa Navotas City Hall bandang alas-10 ng gabi.

Charges, countercharges fly fast

By the Metro Staff

DELIVERY of election returns took some time, with many Commelec taking passages to deliver them to tabulation centers.

Rep. Mitos Lanot, a previously candidate there, said his camp filed motion for a petition with the Commission on Elections seeking to stop the canvassing and the proclamation of a winner.

Lanot wants the Comelec to

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Manila LP bet fumes over Angping votes

By Tarra Quismundo and D.J. Yap

IT JUST keeps getting more complicated.

Liberal Party Manila bet district congressional bet Miles Roces yesterday questioned the counting of votes for local, incumbent Mayor Angping.

Roces, the single-term Representative-elect, filed a petition for correction of manifest error to Manila's Board of Canvassers.

The correction he wanted dealt was the number of votes garnered by Angping, running of the Nationalist People's Coalition, in his wife Ma. Lourdes.

Angping's camp explained the discrepancy in MC candidates after he withdrew from the race on May 8, a few days before the May 10 ruling on his disqualification case, which he had earned into undercards.

Members of the board of election inspectors in schools in Quiapo, Sta. Ana and Binondo counted Angping votes when they read the ballots.

No order!

At the 8. Bilibid Elementary School, a voluntary counted the Angping votes in their first set received any official Comelec order not to do so.

But, as far as Roces is concerned, he is running unopposed, and Angping's are disqualified as of April 30 as the Comelec failed to submit.

On election day, Roces' camp ordered a Comelec order telling BEIs to delete Angping from the official list of candidates.

The order, dated May 10, and signed by Comelec Law Department Director 4 Atoshi Ditang, directed the Comelec field offices to implement Comelec Resolution 6823, declaring Angping disqualified.

Help us find him

MACALE

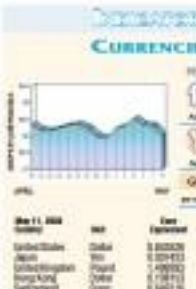
THE Inquirer needs your help in locating Ma. Theresa Macale "Baby" C. Macale.

The boy was reported missing since Tuesday of

Canon
003-10-55 to 60

WEDNESDAY
MAY 12, 2004
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
B1
BUSINESS

Peso slides past 56:$1; stocks slump



By Doris C. Dumlao and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE P0.33 slid back to the 56:$1 level yesterday on weak regional markets and the still shaky lead of incumbent president Macapagal-Arroyo based on initial results of Monday's presidential elections, traders said.

The local currency opened at 55.88 and hit an intra-day low of 56.47 before closing at 55.90 to the dollar at the Philippine Dealing System on a turnover of $107 million.

In a single day, the peso lost 38 centavos from the 55.5825 closing on Friday, the last trading day before Monday's presidential elections.

At the same time, stocks fell to a three-week low yesterday, weakened by prospects of higher interest rates and justify by unofficial tallies showing a tight race between President Macapagal-Arroyo and movie actor Fernando Poe Jr.

Telecom leader Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) led the market decline, dropping 6.55 percent or P569 to P1,020, and accounting for 20.2 percent of total trade. Its chief rival Globe Telecom Inc. ended 4.82 percent or P65 lower at P770.

"Players are tracking the movement of foreign markets and are possibly discounting a victory by President Macapagal," said Eight Equities president Joey Bonus.

"And what do we get? We get the same problems," he said, citing the sinking bond. "I'm not saying we'd be in chaotic beat with FG."

The main index dropped 2.09 percent or 46.43 points to 1,508.26, its lowest since April 19. Value turnover rose to P569.22 million from Friday's P463.28 million, as losers swamped gainers 4-to-1 here.

Money traders said that aside from the sharp dollar gains against Asian currencies—on expectations of the removal of the historically low interest rates by the US Federal Reserve soon—the peso was weakened by uncertainties over recent polls.

Based on the latest unofficial count, the market-favored GMA was leading by only a slim margin over FPJ.

Sanghe Jimenez ng Filipinas Deputy Governor Armando Tetangco Jr. acknowledged that the strong dollar and political uncertainties had weighed down the peso, but noted the intervention did not intervene in defense of the local currency.

"It's a knee-jerk reaction because of the strong dollar, with the good data last Friday and also the expectations of an increase in US interest rates," Tetangco said, noting the Japanese yen and the Thai baht had likewise weakened against the US currency.

On Monday, the peso rumbled to an eight-month low of 114.14 against the dollar.

However, Tetangco said the peso's long-term trend was still toward appreciation and that the local currency could still hit the 54:$1 level earlier projected by BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

Peso to

T-bill yields soften; 91-day rate at 7.032%

By Michelle V. Rama

RESULTS for short-term government securities was relatively strong yesterday, showing market calmness in the absence of any significant threat to the running of ballots from last Monday's elections.

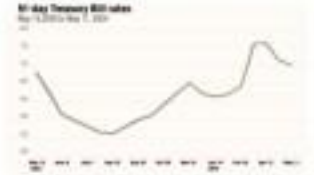
The market's willingness to park their funds in short-term government securities helped further soften rates for the 91- and 182-day treasury bills, whose yields stood at 7.032 percent and 8.227 percent, respectively, during yesterday's auction.

The 91-day rate was 13.9 basis points lower than the previous rate of 7.261 percent, while that of the 182-day T-bill was 4 basis points lower than the 8.267 percent recorded earlier. (One percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points)

The average rate for the 364-day bills, however, was by a meager 1.1 basis points to 9.888 percent.

National Treasurer Mina Pigueras told reporters that the results of yesterday's auction showed that the market, mostly composed of banks, had enough liquidity and was therefore banking for investment securities. She said investing in government securities was one of the best options that could give them decent yields.

All three rates government securities (T-bills) were oversubscribed, worth of tenders for the 91-day debt paper reached P450 billion compared with the P2.5 billion offered, or 46.41 points to 1,508.26, its lowest since April 19. Value turnover rose to P569.22 million from Friday's P463.28 million, as losers swamped gainers 4-to-1 here.



results the government.

The Bureau of Treasury's auction committee accepted P9.32 billion worth of bids for the 91-day bills, P3.3 billion for the 182-day issue, and (1) 265 billion for the 364-day paper.

Although yesterday's auction showed strong appetite for government securities, Pigueras said a still did not reflect the actual amount of liquidity among banks. She said lenders for government

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ELECTION JITTERS

Vehicle sales down 11% in April

By Ronnel W. Domingo

VEHICLE sales dropped by 11 percent in the first four months of the year as many potential buyers decided to hold off purchases until after the general elections.

The joint report of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines and Truck Manufacturers Association showed that vehicle sales declined by 10 percent in April compared to the same period last year.

Compared against sales in March, sales in April dropped by 18.8 percent.

Total vehicle sales in April stood at 6,177 units compared to the 6,827 recorded in the same period last year.

For the first four months, total sales went down to 27,589 units against the 31,009 units sold from January to April of 2003.

The Campi and TMA attributed the decline to the "wait and see" attitude of buyers brought about by election jitters.

The slide in sales was also attributed to "some price increases due to (the weakening of the peso against the dollar, the effect of) which assemblers held back in the past few months," the report added.

"We hope to see a better performance in the coming months most especially after the results has cleared and a president is announced," the groups said.

Sales of passenger cars—which account for a fifth of the market—surged last month by 119 percent to 2,279 units from 1,041 units in April 2003.

From January to April, passenger car sales grew 69 percent to 10,606 units from 6,264 units a year ago.

Passenger cars sold in the first four months represented 35 percent of the 30,000 units expected to be sold in 2004.

However, sales of commercial vehicles—light trucks, trucks and buses, Asian utility vehicles (AUVs) and light commercial vehicles (LCVs); all of which make up four-fifths the market—slid by 33 percent to 3,898 units sold last month from 5,786 units in April 2003.

Sales of light trucks also went down 56 percent; trucks and buses by 12 percent; AUVs by 53 percent; and LCVs by 5 percent.

January to April sales of commercial vehicles went down 31 percent to 16,983 units from 24,745 units in the same period last year.

In the first four months, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. sold the most cars with a 46.3-percent share.

Toyota sold 5,116 units from January to April, or 81.5 percent higher than the 2,820 units it sold during the same period last year.

Placing second was Honda Cars Philippines Inc.,which sold 2,641 units in the first four months.

The figure was 137 percent higher than the 1,114 units it sold in the same period of 2003. Honda took 24.9 percent of the market.

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. ranked third, accounting for 6.7 percent of the market.

Sales of Mitsubishi cars reached 715 units in the first four months from 716 units the same period last year.

Consulting firm claims ₱1.7M from Maynilad

By Christine A. Gaylican

AUDITING firm Joaquin Cunanan and Co. (JCC) has claimed payment of P1.7 million in professional services from debt-ridden Maynilad Water Services Inc.

In a motion filed before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 96, Joaquin Cunanan and Co. has sought the court's permission to participate in the court proceedings reviewing Maynilad's petition for corporate rehabilitation.

The auditing firm was not on the list of creditors reported by Maynilad, prompting the company affiliated with PriceWaterhouse-Coopers to file a separate motion, according to lead counsel Alexander Cabrera.

Joaquin Cunanan and Co. said that it provided some P6 million worth of services to the company.

The Lopez-owned firm engaged JCC's services in April 2002 to review the company's business strategies for the next three years and standardize its operating procedures manual.

The motion claimed that Maynilad still has to pay Joaquin Cunanan some P1.7 million in professional fees.

"Despite repeated demands, Maynilad refuses and consistently failed to pay ... JCC's unpaid professional fees," the motion stated.

Maynilad is currently negotiating a debt-for-equity swap deal with its creditors to settle maturing obligations amounting to P18 billion.

The MWSS is on top of Maynilad's list of creditors with P8 billion in unpaid concession fees.

Gloves are off

COCKTAILS

Victor C. Aganon

THE FLAMES (fiendly curse of rajaui theory fly in) were Equitable PCIBank had now the clear markings of a hostile takeover.

According to the grapevine, the rajaui's financials On last week said EPCIB before the Bilked Regional Trial Court over the alleged irregular booking and disenfranchisement of the 35 customers to the EPCIB board.

In explaining their disenfranchisement, EPCIB originally customer Philo Divine told reporters the bank missed the impending by purchase of the Social Security System stake in EPCIB as a hostile takeover attempt.

The 35 camp—also supported by the Government Service Insurance System and EPCIB chairman Manuel Morales—had secured enough proxies from local and foreign institutional investors to nominate two directors to the 10-member EPCIB board, preparatory to the regulatory approval of the 100 sale to Banco de Oro.

EPCIB ruled that the 56 nominees billed to obtain the required nominal shares by the cutoff date of Jan. 15, 2004, only to elect two of the ruling Go family's own choices, former Trade Secretary Cesar Bautista and Ramon Jabar of the SSS, who only acquired them on April 20.

Chinabank swing

EMPIRE Alfonso Yuchengco's agreeing to Jaypee of his Chinabank shares in favor of rajaui Henry Sy Sr. should now pave the way for an out-of-court settlement in the civil suit filed by AY against the unknown buyer(s) of the Chinabank in Chinabank.

But according to former Bangko Sentral Governor Gabriel Singson, who brokered the talks between the two rajaui, the sale of AY's block in China Banking Corp. is an entirely different issue from the AY interplunder case.

Incidentally, an AY daughter also shared that view.

But if you believe the pro-AY legal grapevine, the former ambassador has already indicated his willingness to propose a motion, subject to an agreement with the other party, to have the suit be initiated before the Makati Regional Trial Court establishment.

AY filed the suit after the International Commercial Bank of China discarded a preliminary agreement with the rajaui and sold its 8.870 percent stake in Chinabank to unknown buyers for a higher price.

That sale was traditionally entered through the stock brokerage firm of Eddie Gotang, a lawyer by ally prompting speculations that the Sys had been behind the acquisition.

But with the AY's rapprochement and by because of last weekend's agreement with AY having now become the majority shareholder in Chinabank, the saving value of the Taiwan block, whoever holds that stake now, has lost its strategic significance.

Competitive calling index

THAILAND, which until recently the Philippines has compared its macroeconomic indicators with, has further pulled past the country on the competitiveness of overseas call rates.

Thailand's cellular phone companies early this week announced a drastic reduction in overseas calling rates. For instance, calls to the United States will now be billed at 9 baht (about $3.16 cents) a minute.

Similar calls to the United Kingdom, on the other hand, will now be charged at 14 baht (about $4.3 US cents) a minute.

In contrast, say Globe and Smart charge an identical 49 cents a minute for most overseas destinations, while unscrupulous Sun sets its key market share with a more aggressive 29 cents/minute.

Still No. 1

THE 10-percent market share of Liberty Flour Mills, as reported in this column Monday, referred to the latter's technically biggest of flour. On the other hand, "Bliyo," which is produced and marketed by a sister company, Liberty Commodities, still remains the undisputed market leader in retail barcake and flour mixes, according to a company spokesperson.

Heard through the grapevine

AN inheritance row is threatening to break out in the open among the heirs of late society jeweler Fe Bautille.

(Email: anchisto_pili@yahoo.com or anchisto_pili@hotmail.com

Peso slides past 56 . . .

From page B1

Asked about the impact of the elections, he said: "Well, it's not yet over. They are still counting, although you can see the results of the exit polls."

The exit polls indicated that GMA may have won a first 6-year term.

The stock market was closed on Monday, a special holiday for the national elections.

"The presidential race is neck and neck," said Elena Bautista, research head at Unicapital Securities. "Pressure is yesterday, surveys showed (Mr. Macapagal) with a comfortable lead but the latest outcome shows mixed results. It raises some worries."

"We were on (national) holiday. We would have dropped if our market was open (last Monday). This was a reaction to the fall in most markets. Basically I would attribute 70 to 75 percent of the fall (yesterday) to how Asian markets behaved. The numbers were pummeled because of the outlook on local issues," Jojo Madrid, partner at local broker Philippine Equity Partners Inc., said.

"Twenty-five percent would be because of initial poll results since this race is tighter than expected between GMA and FPJ," he added.

Paul Joseph Garcia, chief investment officer at Fund manager ING Investment Management Philippines, said most investors were influenced by the fall in other regional markets.

Analysts also said a weaker yuan and a sharp decline in overseas markets on Monday contributed to the fall.

"Eventually, I wouldn't associate it very much with elections. The composition is right, but I think it's premature to relate it with elections," said Monique Lourenz, a dealer at BPI Equitiss.

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Gov't exempts ecozone firms from energy tax

By Rossel W. Dorings

EXPORTERS located in economic zones would enjoy lower electricity rates as the Philippine Economic Zone Authority exempted them from paying a certain portion of their power bills, Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said yesterday.

Purisima said the Peza had issued a memorandum circular informing ecozone firms, which pay the 5-percent gross income tax, that they no longer have to pay the 3-percent power distribution tax (Pdt) tax.

Power utilities pass on to end-users the distribution franchise tax as allowed under the RA 7916 or the Special Economic Zone Act of 1995 as amended by RA 8748, as well as the National Internal Revenue Code.

"Electricity is a major cost component in the operations of many export-oriented firms, (especially) the semiconductor and electronics firms," Purisima said.

The official said the companies' power costs were reduced to help them be competitive with similar businesses in Southeast Asia.

"The reduction will enable the semiconductor and electronics' firms, which account for more than half of the country's exports revenues, to offer competitive prices for their products and redouble their operations," Purisima said.

He added that the reduction of power costs for export-oriented firms also helped in making the country an attractive site for offshore manufacturing.

The official said the move was a result of a memorandum of agreement signed between Peza and the Energy Regulatory Commission. Signed last March, the MOA required electricity distributors that would supply electricity exclusively to ecozones to register with Peza.

Purisima added that the exemption from the franchise tax was just the first phase in the government's efforts to provide ecozone-registered firms with lower power rates.

"The (Department of Trade and Industry), Peza and the Department of Energy are studying a further reduction in electricity rates," he said.

"Such measures are being put in place to enable our ecozones to be cost-effective sites for operations and attractive for both local and foreign businessmen," he added.

T-bill...

From page B1

olds paper could have been more if President Macapagal-Arroyo showed a bigger lead in the presidential race over political neophyte Fernando Poe Jr.

"There is still much liquidity in their vaults right now, but it is still too early for them to see clear signals for a Macapagal victory," Pajarillo said in a briefing after the auction. Partial election results as of yesterday showed President Macapagal was having a not-too-comfortable lead over Poe.

Mr. Macapagal was regarded as the market's favorite candidate after some of short-term government securities began collecting two weeks ago amid news that she had already taken the lead from Poe. Investors rates for government debt paper were on a rising trend when Poe was still leading the race.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS
BANCO DE ORO

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Chinabank buyout a good deal for SM's Sy, say analysts

By Dwin C. Bustillo

THE BUYOUT of the Yuchengcos' stake in China Banking Corp. is a good deal for the SM group of mall magnate Henry Sy, even if it would not result in an immediate merger with Banco de Oro Universal Bank, according to analysts.

The business-as-usual stance of Chinabank, as SM Investments Corp. signed a memorandum of agreement to buy the Yuchengco group's 11.66 percent stake in Chinabank for a little over P2.5 billion or about P650 per share. This deal further firming up the stake of the SM group, already the single biggest shareholder in Chinabank, to 51.66 percent.

"SM Investments Corp. believes that China Bank is a good investment and a profitable bank," SMIC said in a statement yesterday. "There is no plan for a merger with Banco de Oro. The existing management structure will be maintained."

Eagle Equities Inc. president Joseph Roma said that based on Chinabank's profitability, SM has bagged a good deal with the Yuchengcos.

Eric Claudio, head of research at Unicapital Securities, said the cash-laden SM group appeared to be hunting one big-ticket economic empire.

But while SM has rolled out a merger between Chinabank and BDO, banking regulators continue to encourage consolidation within the banking system.

"If they will merge, it will be positive for the banking system," said Alberto Reyes, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas deputy governor. "It will result in a bigger and better bank."

Disclosures

FIL-Hispanic Holdings Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 28, 2 p.m. at the Makati Sports Club, Salcedo Village, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of May 7 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

MEGAWORLD Corp. disclosed the resignation of Antonio Montiel as director of the company. Appointed to replace him was Thomas Barrioquinto. The company will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 18, 9 a.m. at Eastwood City Information Center, Eastwood City Walk, Quezon City. Only stockholders of record as of April 16 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

DISCOVERY Wines Manufacturing Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 28, 9 a.m. at the 2/F Grand Ballroom of Rivera Hotel Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Only stockholders of record as of May 6 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

SAN Miguel Corp. and **Ginebra San Miguel Inc.** will hold an investors' briefing on May 13, 2 p.m. at the Executive Dining Room, 24/F of SMC Head Office Complex, Mandaluyong City.

ALI PICAR de Ricky was nominated independent director of **Ayala Inc.**

COMBI-CARE Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 14, 2 p.m. at the Makati Shaw Golf and Country Club, Mandaluyong City. Only stockholders of record as of May 11 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

BETAPHIL Laboratories Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 9, 3 p.m. at the Makati Sports Club, Salcedo Village, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of April 29 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

PHOTT Videos Inc., majority shareholder of Liberty Flour Mills Inc., bought 42,100 shares of Liberty at P13 each. **Compiled by Marlene D. Tabasa PDI Research**

Nenaco penalized for failing to submit disclosure

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has penalized shipping firm Negros Navigation Co. (Nenaco) for non-disclosure of circumstances that may have affected its financial health in the third quarter.

In a letter to Nenaco president Victorino Teruel, the SEC said that it finds "no merit in the explanation" given by the company.

"As admitted in the letter, the company was at that time negotiating for restructuring of debt which is a clear indication of possible liquidity problem if negotiations fail," SEC wrote.

SEC said that "nowhere in the explanation letter can the report could we find that it is in the mid process of negotiation."

What was stated in the company's report are statements "which do not reflect the actual liquidity position."

The SEC imposed a P75,000 fine on the company.

Nenaco vice-president Virginia Tordesillas, in an earlier interview with the SEC, said the fire was one event of events affecting its liquidity at the time it submitted its third quarter financial report last November.

Teruel also said that during that time, their finance showed positive operating results and were enough to support the company's operations.

Globe denies forecast figure

GLOBE Telecom may well be on the road to profit this year, but P11 billion is not going to be one of them.

Globe officials figure they are willing to subscribe to at the time, according to Globe's legal division.

Lawyer Cardinal Cornelio said that the business story on page B1, "Globe expects P11B in net income this year," is untrue.

In a letter, Cornelio said that although Gerardo Ablaza Jr., Globe president and CEO, did say that the company would "look at ways to reach profitability," the statement referred to the overall financial and operational performance of the company.

"It is Globe's policy not to disclose projections regarding our financial and operating results," Cornelio stressed.

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PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of the Philippine National Bank will be held on May 25, 2004 at 8:00 a.m. at the Ballroom, Upper Lobby, Century Park Hotel, 599 Pablo Ocampo Sr. St., Malate, Manila.

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Secretary's Proof of Notice and Quorum
3. Approval of the Minutes of the 2003 Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on May 27, 2003
4. Report of the President on the Results of Operations for the Year 2003
5. Approval of the 2003 Annual Report
6. Ratification of All Acts and Proceedings of the Board of Directors and Corporate Officers since the 2003 Annual Stockholders' Meeting
7. Election of Directors
8. Appointment of External Auditor
9. Other Matters
10. Adjournment

Minutes of the 2003 Annual Stockholders' Meeting as well as resolutions of the Board of Directors from May 27, 2003 will be available for examination during office hours at the Office of the Corporate Secretary.

Only stockholders of record as of April 26, 2004 will be entitled to notice of and vote at this meeting. Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m.

If you cannot personally attend the meeting, you may designate your authorized representative by submitting a **PROXY** to the Office of the Corporate Secretary not later than 5:00 p.m. on May 19, 2004. Any proxies so received will be validated on May 20, 2004, 8:30 a.m., at the Office of the Stock Transfer Agent at Allied Bank Center, 6754 Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Pasay City, March 5, 2004

RENATO J. FERNANDEZ
Corporate Secretary

Vote so close; Bush learning Filipino

DRIVEBUY today is not a good day for me to write about the stock market. The voting is over, but the result still uncertain. The Comelec can either use the very quick count or the slow count. The very quick count is available after only 8 hours, 4 hours before the polls close, but clearly it does not include all the votes and is therefore not reliable. The slow count is totally accurate, but unfortunately takes 6 years.

In 2001, over 300 people here were killed in accidents, not a good advertisement for the country. In England, the campaign lasts only three weeks and is very low key. In the last election, there was only one casualty, an old lady who slipped on a leaflet. But while observing the polling booth, it was here discovered that the banner had been impounded by the Philippines.

My 4-year-old daughter is a prolific reader like me, and refuses to continue a story a word that she does not know; she asks me to define it. One of the words was "Filipino is important." After I had explained it, she put her finger on her nose and said, "This is a flat nose." Then she put her finger on my nose and said, "Dat is pointed." I set there stunned. In 12 years time, Miss Bearbull will be writing her own column. Dooyoo.

I remember falling asleep in the middle of an English literature class. The teacher threw a book across, knocking me out, "What was that?" "It flying Clarence," he replied.

I was standing on top of the Shopping Mall of Asia when I saw a loud noise. I thought it was a bomb, but it was a helicopter. Then I saw a second helicopter, and then a third. Then I saw a fourth helicopter, and then a fifth helicopter. Then I saw a sixth helicopter, and then a seventh helicopter. Then I saw an eighth helicopter, and then a ninth helicopter. Then I saw a tenth helicopter, and then an eleventh helicopter. Then I saw a twelfth helicopter, and then a thirteenth helicopter. Then I saw a fourteenth helicopter, and then a fifteenth helicopter. Then I saw a sixteenth helicopter, and then a seventeenth helicopter. Then I saw an eighteenth helicopter, and then a nineteenth helicopter. Then I saw a twentieth helicopter, and then a twenty-first helicopter. Then I saw a twenty-second helicopter, and then a twenty-third helicopter. Then I saw a twenty-fourth helicopter, and then a twenty-fifth helicopter. Then I saw a twenty-sixth helicopter, and then a twenty-seventh helicopter. 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LIFESTYLE

Editor: Cheio Bonoan-Formoso
Chief of Correspondents: Pam Pascual

A Mother's Day scrapbook

She is strong. She is bold. She is courageous. She is talented. She is a friend. She is loving. She is giving. She is forgiving. She is understanding. She is kind. She is life. She is a pillar. She is a gift. She is a song. She is a treasure. She is mom.

We asked our correspondents, readers and friends to celebrate the most important woman in their lives by sharing their words and images in a post-Mother's Day tribute. After all, our moms deserve more than just one day

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LA SALLE

A toast to half of the best duo in the world

By Lemuel Guerrero

THERE are two kinds of teenagers—those who always complain about their parents and those who believe they have the best parents in the world.

I fall under the latter group. I'd love to tell you all about both my parents, Larry and Lucy, but since this is Mother's Day, I'm just going to tell you about half of what I believe is the best duo when it comes to raising children.

I don't think I can put into words what my mother means to me. It's just not possible, but I'm going to try. I can sincerely say that I am extremely thankful that my mother is the way she is. I think my mom could write a book on the proper ways to bring up a child. She has always aimed first on her better. Not the best way to raise her children is to be the kind of parent that she didn't mind really talk to.

She is probably the most humble mother out there. My mom makes raising four brats look easy. She always tell me mothers everything, and I mean everything. We never need to, as they say, "make sabot" to go to parties or to go out with my friends. I am 100 percent sure she knows I am close with all of my friends and with Jack's my parents is because my mother and my father raised us in such a way that even without them having to say it to us ourselves times, we all know that hurt by always come first.

My mom would always put her children's interest before hers. She would always be there to support us, to cheer us on, to comfort us, to offer advice and to cheer us up. My mom should have a medal because both in her honor for being able to cope with four growing boys and still be able to bring them all together.

I love everything about my mom. I love the way she talks in slang every now and then, the way she always eats dark chocolate after every meal (she always has a stash of it somewhere), and the way she always has her camera ready during family outings.

I love how, no matter how many times she has watched a movie, she always cracks in the exact same way the first time she saw it—laugh, cry, get shocked, you name it. I love how we can talk to her like a true friend.

Hell, there are just too many things I love about my mom.

I believe that my mom can happily say that she has lived her life to the fullest. I am proud to have her as my mother. I am proud to tell everyone how much I love my mom, because if I can't be proud of having her as a mother, then I can't be proud of anything at all. She is, in every way, a true mother, and we love her for it.

THE OBJECT of our food kids' affection

Appreciating Mom

By Patricia Sammeron

MY MOTHER is a model of how to live life. We can learn from her mistakes, and be a better person than she is.

Whatever short-comings she may have, every moment at the dinner table, every joke she delivers, every pause she gives.

I would say this is my way to tell her all the things that aren't right for a child to do, considering all the things she does for me. I appreciate everything, even though sometimes I do not show it. I love you, mom.

How could you still be?

for my world so wise, forbidden

To Mom
Beautiful—
how could you still be?
when your sole concern refuse to count against the divers
when your sweet face refuses to lose smudges tainted by a child
when Time refuses to stop diverting those fat beyond your prime...?
Kind—
how could you still be?
when you can't help you give can be used and abused
when every goodness you seen can still reap the opposite
when every kind word you've spoken could be twisted into lies...?
Loving—
how could you still be?
when you have lose your eyes somewhere along your way
when you have lost the allies you've always thought to know
when you have lost the strength to carry the weight of the world...?
Hopeful—
how could you still be?
when you feel the enemy stealing you into nothingness
when you feel the light flickering and leaving you in darkness
when you feel God had forsaken you and swoon as the away...?
Loving—
how could you still be?
when you know that tears would fall from your eyes unseen
when you know your heart would break with sadness and grief
when you know your love might never be returned...?
How?
How could you still be?
I would die and still never know
Unless I become what you've always been to me
—A Mother

MOTHER of three, Esther Tanya De Guzman, proud mom of Kyle, Ramon and Gino, with her husband Pharaizon and her first-born in the late '70s

Leaving a legacy

By Ludin Ann Tan

MY mom had grown up in what I would call a different era. Times were tougher, and money was scarce. As the youngest in a brood of seven, she had no choice but to wear hand-me-down clothes and use hand-me-down books. Her allowance was a paltry P2.

Of course, back then, it was enough to buy a dozen sampaguita. It was an era with a different economy. It was absolutely fortuitous to only look to old dolls, much less to your own parents. And being the pious daughter that she is, my mom never dared to disobey my grandma.

Times have changed. My college allowance was not P2 (clearly!), but more like P200. Of course, with the peso devaluation, it's not quite, the difference is not as large. Young people today are also more independent. And I would often find myself arguing my case with my (in)famous sense of disagreement.

Through my mom would occasionally reminisce about the old days, those moments are meant to keep us grounded. For it, she has changed with the times. She gave us the gift and most sacred of messages regularly. She watched "Mirror Gazette" before I did. And she is insisting we take her to Boracay this summer!

First of all, though my mom grew up with a strict disciplinarian, she has chosen to treat us with a firm grip—still strict, but not too tight as to choke us. I cannot recall a time when my mom forbade us to engage in any activity. And though I know she would rather have us by her side, she would never hold us back.

When my mom has to take business trips abroad, my mom would always pray for her safety and wait by his phone. When my brother stays out late, she discovers fall into asleep deep, and refuses wake up until the wee hours.

In all my years of growing up, I have always taken comfort in the fact that whatever happens to me out there, I can go home to a great family and be happy. I believe it is with this thought of a safe harbor that I have dared to explore great distances, great depths, and great heights.

They say there are three ways to leave a legacy: plant a tree, write a book, or teach the life of a child. My mom has chosen the third and hardest way. She has the me and my siblings, but also the all those who became her students in her 17 years of teaching.

Happy Mother's Day, Ma! We love you.

My Mother's Day gift a year too late

By Amy Rose C. Zarate

"SORRY Mama... my woman's ahhh to buy you a gift for Mother's Day," I said to her.

She replied, "It's okay, you're taking care of me and that's enough."

That was one year ago; a few weeks after my mother died. She died while I was in Singapore, awaiting the exit college entrance exams.

The past year has been the hardest, it was worse than the year before that, when my parents got sick. Last year was harder than the years when I would waste a week whenever I come within five feet of her or when she would go in and out of the hospital for her blood transfusions.

It was much worse than the years I awaited in her room watching over her for hours, when I would get chicken soup over mine the sole reason or because of the disorder we are in when I would bathe her and watch her. It was hell compared to the time when I couldn't do anything but watch her pass for me, unable to talk, with cubes down her throat and water in her eyes.

Last year was the worst. Because last year my mom wasn't there... and last year I really wanted to take care of her.

One of the things I really miss about my mother are her funny quips she was for everything. She would have pranks, crack jokes with my friends, dance like she was about, and do things I used to think were ridiculous... ha!

I graduated last March and after the baccalaureate Mass, some of the girls were going on stage to sing. I watched them look at their daughters with pride while singing. I will be there. "I was hard as you because I think to run but not as when the parents sang 'Girls Girls'.

I have tight days and days that if my mom were alive, she would have been the first one on the stage and she was 'Girls Girls' dancer in the group. I started to cry because I missed her, and because I was jealous of all my friends who had their moms dancing on stage. But, strangely still, I could hear mom. I knew she was there, singing along, willing me that I should always be here for me.

Sometimes I feel like hugging one of my moms or telling my best friends my secrets. I miss my mother's touch, her voice and when it was like to buy her. Sometimes I dream about her and wish to see her face. I don't want to wake up.

I miss my mother... Even if she was always telling me to clean my room and be more responsible, and even if it was such a hassle to take care of her when she got sicker.

I miss her because she was the one who took care of me for 16 years. I wish she was still here so I could watch her live and take care of me.

If mom were alive during my graduation, I'm sure she'd be the first one on stage

Missing my 'laundrywoman'

By Sue Marcelo
PhilStar Correspondent

My mother sent me a text message once. 'How are you?' it said. 'I miss my dishwasher.'

MY HOMEBOY has never been overtly affectionate. For some reason, any sort of affection has to be tempered with biting humor, or anything that serves to [illegible]

It took her a long, very time from a problem hanging over your head like the sword of Damocles.

I am very doing dishwash once when my brother sent me a text message. It's really my phone: "How are you?" it said. "I miss my dishwasher."

Motherless on Mothers' Day

By Ella Jesse D.S., as told to Nitz Mark M. Salido

I ALWAYS thought I had a happy family. Now I know for a fact that we were. But that's all in the past now.

Mom was a theater artist who died after a series of illness. Although there were moments we had rough patches, we managed to get out on smooth sails. We did a lot of family stuff. We went out, watch movies and go to Mass. We were very happy. We looked really happy. And I never thought anything horrible would happen to us. Just something dad.

Five months ago, mom ran away with a lesbian. I stay with her my little sister. She said they were just friends, said my little sister. I don't see this three months ago. I couldn't live with her anymore knowing our dad.

She said she and Papa had marital problems, but she didn't bother to let us go over if there's such a thing. It's not as if we were that close, ehh.

Although my little sister is young enough to be brainwashed and fooled by maternal things, my older brother and I know better. We know the truth. We know why she supposedly ruined homosexual. We know why she left Papa. We know why she can stand and cursing me and my brother. We know what's making her happy. We know who she's with but we like him lover.

A month ago, while I was eating fish balls at a street corner with my boyfriend, a vehicle stopped in front of us. The windows rolled down to reveal my mom and her lesbian lover. My mom said, "[unclear] moment," leaving me head into my boyfriend. She said, "regulate tomato," and I shook my head.

She wrote something about how I was a bad daughter and that I wasn't grateful, blah blah blah. And I asked her what kind of a mother she was. How could she leave us? How could she ignore her about me and my dad? How could she not understand that the way I was treating her was simply a reaction to her own actions? It was just one of the many consequences of her actions.

After a conversation, a choice of agreeable quotes, she said goodbye and told me how much she loved me. After she went to [illegible] strong. I cried. I hoped she didn't see me. I had to stay strong and wipe and hours what in front of her. I'm chosen to show her that love lasts in these circumstances.

This year was my first Mother's Day without her. I miss her so much and I just pray that she'd come back to us soon. While there's still time. While Papa hasn't found anyone to replace her yet. While we're still not that distant and angry.

I know my mom's lesbian lover will just leave her when she finds someone fresher, younger and more beautiful. My mom, after all, just ruined someone who used to be the lesbian's all-time love. I just hope she'll wake up from all that soon. I hope next Mother's Day, she'd be back with us. With me, my brother and my dad.

And I hope she won't forget to bring along our sister.

What a mom is

By Michelle M. Sta. Romana

I didn't see the child
you have dreamed about,
I may never be child you
have prayed to become,
and I have made a lot
of mistakes, no doubt
but even if I have been
But with your strength
there to stay
Through all these difficulties,
bumpy roads, I never left
alone. Given, through problems
weighed so on my shoulders,
you carried some for me,
and dried me out to the
smooth, peaceful road.
When I was up running in pain,
you soon and down it all away
You helped me stand up,
and walked with me to the
dark lane, lightening it up
with love and joy.
Even if I'm too big now to be
rocked in your arms,
thought I can walk on my own,
I am always welcomed in your arms,
as I am the child you have
wished to love and care for.

LIFESTYLE

This day's for me, too

By Angela Rose Noriega

THIS Mothers' Day was the first since I celebrated it as a mother. I gave birth to a baby girl last March 27, and let me tell you, motherhood is something else.

The first time I saw my baby girl was when she was placed in my tummy after her umbilical cord was cut. That moment alone was overwhelming. I had all kinds of emotions: happiness, amazement, excitement, you name it. I felt it.

Then later, I caught my little one and finally left her alone with him. At that point, I got scared. I mean, how was I supposed to take care of this little creature who weighed less than 10 lbs? I didn't even want to hold her because I was scared I might break her. That may sound ridiculous but it's true.

Fast forward to a month and two weeks later, and here I am, rehearsing it one last of sleep at night, losing weight because I'm actually forgetting to eat, and yet, with all the pain I have with the aching tummy I'm still giddy and happy because every time I look at her, every little smile, even her crying, breaks my heart all over again and makes me fall in love with her more. She is worth it.

MY valued co-worker/friend

Every
kick
from her,
every
kiss,
smile,
even her
crying,
breaks
my heart

ALMOST VALEDICTORIAN!

I would have been valedictorian. Had I taken Power Memory. Right after graduation.

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Gerascophobic mama

Word for the day: Gerascophobia. the fear of growing old

By Anna Elvira S. Arcallana

WORD of the day: Gerascophobia. Fear of growing old.

My aunt believes she's actually turning 40 in two months. No one believes she's not an image model of some 16-year-old. No one believes she's not a dancer by profession. No one believes she's not some model or actress on TV. Nicolas believes she's my mother.

Well, honestly, I can't blame them. Mama can pass off as sweet-16 pa lihd. Her get-up is the major factor in creating this "deceiving image." She wears the coolest outfits in the world (evident, by the standard of girls my age), in tandem with her bubbly personality.

Shocking galore (an expression she often uses, by the way) fact #1: She has more sleeveless, tube, backless outfits and mini-skirts than I have. She's actually the one who throws me to wear those kinds of clothes. Well, I simply can't. I get too conscious about my chest and tummy since I felt I owe it to her.

Because she is simply gerascophobic. She got to Mama's second home. Where else can you preserve youthful beauty? After a tedious day of work for my brains, she strikes in the gym to burn those excess calories and build that appealing figure. And of course, she shines as the brightest in the circle during parties.

The passion of youth is burning stronger inside my mom than in mine, concludably. She says that one-time is her priority because she wants to "age with grace." I remember how every summer, she would relentlessly drag me to the gym, inculcating in me the significance of exercise to sustain good shape and health.

As I'm actually the lazy type, Mama position me to the treadmill, and gives me a lecture on how exercising frequently can gradually eliminate my sluggishness.

Yes, she's one of those rare parents who appreciate what being a teenager is like. I do not see her as an authoritarian tyrant who has this endless tendency to admonish/extend the restrictions. I am facing an an adolescent life. On the contrary, I see her as the 24-hour best friend who I can talk to or text around-the-clock anytime.

The best thing that Mama knows how to create is balance. Balance in terms of instilling discipline along with other core values, and at the same time, giving a characteristic and appreciable leniency.

Because of Mama's strategic game plan in parenting, my 24-year-old sister and I treat her with utmost respect, but at the same time, we do not see she need to exclude her from our "spill-the-secrets" conversations.

Shocking galore fact #2: Mama knows all my crushes I have had since I was 11 years old. She even comes me about them! It's even more incredible that sometimes, when I wouldn't tell her who my crush is, she suddenly discovers who he is by mere gut feeling!

Shocking galore fact #3: She's more excited than I am about the prom next year. She's desperate to find me a date. Aaagh! It's really hard to control her overenthusiasm. I keep telling her that I'll be okay, but she says she's over-reassured! "Hey, I want you to enjoy your prom to the fullest," she says. Hay! Don't remind me again! Again. "Mama, enjoying the prom is not dependent on having a date." Hmmm... I'm sure you would rather not know how she replied to that.

But, each day I live, I will never forget what my classmates once told me, which remains the greatest truth in my life: "Anna, you have the coolest mom in the world!"

MY retired "mom," Delia Ramos

A mentor's mothering

By Tammy David
2BA'7 Correspondent

IN high school, every time I had problems, I would run to my favorite teachers or counselors since they are rugged as "second mothers." But when I entered college, it was a bit difficult looking for that motherly figure in the university. Professors didn't seem to care, and it was hard to look for somebody to trust, unlike my old teachers who genuinely saw me grow up.

The good thing in my school now is each student has an assigned mentor. The mentor is somebody from the faculty who checks on the student's achievement and, sometimes, personal life.

During my freshman year, I didn't go to a single mentoring session since I relied on friends. On my sophomore year, which is said to be the most crucial year, I decided to give "mentorship" a try.

I was assigned a mentor, but knowing my stubborn self, I asked the faculty to give me another one. I chose one of the renowned figures in the University, Irene Delia Tarazona, who happened to be the head of the Registrar's office.

Almost everybody feared her because of her "terror" persona and threats to the entire estimate. I barely knew her, as I usually scuttle claiming Margaret Thatcher to be my mentor, brother.

I remember before she officially became my mentor that I ran to her office after Theology class. I begged her to transfer me to another block since I feared the prior who was teaching us. Miraculously, I didn't lie by saying the actual excuse like my block mates as it would affect my schedule. That one told her that I was aware of the teacher's "incendiary rate" and my fear that I might not able to get through his legendary exams.

"Remember. If you fail this class, you can never, ever transfer again, ever!" she told me after. I was able to transfer to the other block. Because I learned so much, I was able to get a high grade in my Theology class.

So I made it a point to have mentoring sessions with her as part of my school year resolutions. Like a lively bragging about going to the neighborhood bazaars' boons, I would brag to my friends that I had the most fervent campus figure as my mentor, while I would rest up shaking before entering her office.

But with each session, she became less and less the "evil headmistress" and more and more the understanding mother who encouraged her child without being too pushy, who listened without being judgmental. She did not demand from me much, but I felt I was pressured not to fail her since she would take time to check on me as a mentee.

I met my buddy, but as my mentor paid off, because she wouldn't kept me on my toes, and her words – "Sophomore year separates the good from the bad!" – always rang in my head whenever I felt like giving up.

So when I heard that I passed my applications to management and sophomore year, I did not call my friends or my parents first. I immediately called "Mommy" since I felt I owe it to her.

I'm just writing on hold for now since I'm concentrating on school. But with Mother's Day, I feel I should thank this motherly figure. I finally found in college.

Happy Mother's Day, Mommy!

My golden girl

By Nitz Mark M. Sablan
2BA'7 Correspondent

MY parents had me during their high school years, back when they were their impulsive, immature and irresponsible selves.

After two more screaming infants and with hands-me-walloping between my mom and dad, they finally decided to put an end on all the fights, and separated.

Due to both parties' undesirable incapabilities, our custody kept her youngest and moved back in with her parents, while my dad surrendered me and my brother to his mother. Since my father eventually got stuck in rehab and my mother went to the United States for dollars, the only parent I was left with was my lola. I grew up under her wing, and for this I send flying kisses to God.

My lola didn't go to school, but she certainly ain't a dum-dum. She's witty and smart and diligent. And even if the right side of her body is paralyzed now because of a stroke, she has never called in one recruit and considered herself useless. In fact, she functions just like everybody else and has even learned to write using her left hand, just to prove she's no less of a person than other her cronies.

She lectured me on being a responsible citizen, a reader and a thinker at home and supervised my studies since my Mehrash to guess back to the normal. (So I opened bullies that. Yes, we do have gaps and lots of moments when eyebrows scrunch, but it's not as if we're licky and friendly. There are actually lots of stuff this lola-age random appear to me—like eating tomato ketchup, figuring out why cookies crumble and stacks of magazines and listening to the hits of the Ara Mina & Dawn.

Warm and nurturing

Just like other grandmothers (and mothers for that matter), she is a warm nurturing figure, and this is one of my favorite things about her. She is thoughtful, always considerate of my feelings and always after my welfare. She makes sure I eat on time and happy and full.

I know I'm gonna start to sound like every grandchild in the whole world, but I just have to let it out: my lola is the very best cook in the whole solar system. The food that she whips up will make you want to gorge yourself.

I know that all grandmothers are entitled the Best Cook plaque by their grandchildren, but I just have to hand over the crown, scepter, sash and banquet to my lola. She never follows recipes and does everything according to her heart. She may skimp on ingredients since she's a frugal soul, but the dish still turns out worthy of a rating of 10, serving spoons or similar. Imagine what wonders she could evoke if she had the money to buy expensive and high-quality ingredients!

Still on being thoughtful and a good cook, I remember how my lola devotedly prepared my lunch of school from my first grade up. My classmates drooled with envy until sixth grade, when I decided to try to be cool and buy cafeteria food instead. Whatch, ya'lin because, cookies!

My lola is also the sweetest soul on earth. She is non-violent to above and will not even raise her voice at me. And there is no doubt that she loves unconditionally, unconditionally.

There was one time when my lola suffered me her last P50 so I could buy medicine for my headache. I hesitated but eventually accepted the money to buy myself a single tablet. Later that day, I found me the herself needed medicine for her own pain. I attempted for coins and didn't stop until I was able to buy her what she needed.

Every time I remember that incident, I am reminded how lucky I am to have someone like my lola. Someone who loves me no matter how many pimples mushroom on my face. Someone who loves me no matter what.

Salty tears

In high school, I actually wanted to be independent by living with a bunch of strangers. I remember the pure excitement that surrounded me my dormmate when we I thought of the great stuff I'd experience once I was on my own.

Of course, I didn't spill anything to my beloved lola. Saying she would step out from actually fulfilling one of my dreams. The day I had to move out, I told her all about it and sobbed what I thought, she didn't hinder my plans. She watched me as I lugged my things out of the house, and I swear I saw tears in her eyes.

Almost two years ago, my boyfriend and I broke up. Him was to the United States and because I'm a total fool there says many more boys in the world and I only had to make myself "available" to literally to the opposite sex.

In order to be "available," according to my mom, one must remember the following:

1. Don't be too self-conscious.
2. Don't be "crying lord."
3. Listen to your mother.
4. Be interesting. To be interesting, you must follow your mother's second rule as well (see 3). To do well in class, do your homework as soon as you get it. And do not do it on the last minute.
5. Be yourself. Don't pretend to be someone you're not. Don't be afraid to be different.
6. Be confident. Walk with your head held high and your back straight.
7. Be nice to everyone.
8. Be sweet.
9. Be smart.
10. Be pretty.

Okay, so I made that last one up. But I should have included it in the list because it is very important. Mothers are the best, and I'm just thankful my grandmother was sweet to be a mother to me to this very day.

Throw away Cosmo, and other words of wisdom from my mom

By Rissie G. Rigtang-ana

MY mom brought me up as a single parent. She and my dad separated when I was young. Even though she is almost weird of the issue so easily to touch, she makes sure that she gives me enough attention.

She is not strict with me; she believes that being too uptight will cause me to rebel. Thus, she just treats me like an my going out at night. But I also make sure I do not abuse her trust.

Even though I grew up with a liberated parent, my values are intact because she gave me the chance to evaluate circumstances on my own. Clichéd as it may sound, being an only child makes her my mom, best friend, and mother all rolled into one breast of package.

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LOLA with her two ops

One cool mom

By Inky Pilot D. Adefuin

FRIENDS often tell me I have the coolest mom. That's Filomena Duarte-Adefuin.

Growing up, my siblings and I never had to worry about Mama not allowing us to go on "gimmicks," overnight bonding sessions with friends, out-of-town trips.

It didn't matter to her if there were two in the house. The day after our grad ball, she cleared upon me and around 10 of my classmates, girls, boys and in-between "confused" in a single hotel room, sleeping side by side each other. And she thought it was cool.

I was never quite able to relate to any fictional character of having "soccer mom-ness." Their fear of getting caught and getting suspended from their lovers. Mama encouraged my lovers and I to have boyfriends, my brother to have a girlfriend. She said it was better that there's someone to love us and take care of us, especially when they're away.

But, and it's a big "but", no cut. She's very clear on that. But if you really can't stop yourself, she said, let it know what you're doing and get protected.

We often withhold our blessed sub-topping to her generic and tempting personality, and her having led a liberal, colorful life when she was younger. But I guess it's all about Mama teaching us that if you have to trust somebody, that person will not do anything before dragging to herself that trust.

There is pervasive, something we would not compromise for momentary pleasure or selfish gains. It's a lifelong lesson only Mama can give.

The unexpected joy of my life

May 12, 2002
5:58 p.m., Sunday

To my dearest Nehemiah Luke,

This is the first and last thing that I want you to know. I love you very, very much.

I've just off writing this letter to you for so long. Today you are 36 weeks already and the days are coming by so fast. And it won't be long before you will be cooing and grinning like the little boys.

You won't imagine the joy that you have brought into my life. Just one role, "romantic." Despite my disobeying (not numerous times), He has given me to you, or rather you to me. And you're healthy, strong and good-natured.

Please forgive me if you felt unwanted while you were still in my womb. The obvious unsure of how you were conceived were not favorable to God's sight. But you have been blessed. So much so many people were excited to see you, and you've been showered with gifts, presents and love.

I remember seeing you first on the ultrasound machine. I cried because it confirmed that I was pregnant. I cried because I was so scared. I cried because I was not ready. But most of all, I cried because I didn't know how I could raise you, teach you things, and make decisions for you.

I was still living my life, deciding on what to do for the rest of it, and there you were, totally unexpected presence. How could I take care of you when I couldn't even take care of myself?

I just couldn't get married; I wasn't ready. I wasn't sure I wanted to spend the rest of my life with your father, discovering around me what my mother would say, and of course, I was worried about what other people would say. I knew a lot was expected of me, and I knew I had failed... big time.

So, yeah, please forgive me also if I didn't exactly treat you fine. I didn't feel it in my heart to commit to make up such meeting with him thanks up and prove old wrong him. If I had rushed into marriage just because you were coming pretty soon, I hate that all of us would have suffered eventually.

Forgive me also for being hostile to him before. I didn't want to see him, didn't want him to accompany me every time I had to see the doctor. I was mad at him for not being responsible enough not to get me pregnant. It was so annoying, it felt like "propagation" was going on in my body.

No, despite all this, he still loves me, and he loves you very much, too. If you could only see the look on his face every time he went to the nursery after I gave birth. He was so happy to just look at you, so excited to hold you and carry you and take good care of you.

He's a very good man. Genuinely not perfect, but I have learned to love him again... flaws, crazy jokes and all. He will take very good care of us.

Near to deciding on leaving you, marrying your father would be the second most difficult decision I have to make. It will change our lives completely. But even if I still have fears, doubts and bouts of indecision, I am ready to take that step because I know that God is already there. We don't know what tomorrow may bring, but I believe He plans are perfect and He would never harm us.

I don't know what else to say to you, except that I hope you will grow up to be knowledge of God's love. That you will make wiser decisions than your father and I did, and that you will love Jesus more than anything else in this world.

You have brought me so much joy and fear make, coos, giggles, laughter, even the times when you bite on my fingers or vomit with your entire food (must be morning sickness), or when you don't want to sleep at 2 a.m. because you still like to talk and be talked to.

This is the first and last thing that I write just to you. I love you very, very much.

MOMMY

The story of you by your dad of a young mother. He got married to myself after they were written. Two-year-old Achaeus, oh (who is now a "boy" or a 10-month-old baby boy.

Preschool teacher, wannabe mother

By Bussy Anne Gajit
Staff Correspondent

June 03, 2003

I have misgivings about giving birth. I am smaller than most women and I'm afraid I can't "open" that much. I even have breathing problems, for heaven's sake. What if I rue my baby's head on his way out? Or, they scream out in Summer rueing? I am not even pregnant and yet I can't stop thinking about chromosomal aberrations! And you know what they say about the power of the mind... Oh no.

July 11, 2003

Why says I need to flush myself without pause and crumple my face to bits in front of the door and nurses just to have my own bundles of joy? As a preschool teacher, I am already a mother of 20 at age 24.

Aug. 25, 2003

There's this sweet little girl in kinder class named Abby who loves me. She calls me "I love you!" whenever I pass by. Aww... Just who in it's you to say I don't?

Sept. 8, 2003

Fiesta! We're not on a field trip today and my mother asks it nowhere is right. In times like this I have the most jarring job on earth. I am tired going and from the bathroom. Come on kids, why can't you just pass all at the same time?!

Sept. 29, 2003

My pupil cid was humming "For the First Time" as he was entering my class. There's something amusing about a 4-year-old singing a "grown up" song like that. When I cut in, I sure all the more amused when he didn't stop and in fact asked for an encore. He both enjoyed our little duet. So fun!

Oct. 6, 2003

I caught a girl pupil of mine chanting to her classmates, "Ano ba, ang baho ng hininga mo?" in the cutest tone she could make. Whew.

This is the same girl who unintentionally grew to style out from a plate intended for cookies. She's also the same girl who changes tantrums every other week.

To Ateneo Core and Ateneo Deli Day children not born yet, I'll pull your tongues long enough to hang you if I ever hear you call me Core. Treat me.

Oct. 27, 2003

Girl's mom dropped by the school and the scene I saw from the two noticed me. Its sweet and usual about their affections. I never had that kind of relationship with my mother. I just wish my love for her is strong enough to make me care for her more emotion at all. Is that possible?

Nov. 24, 2003

Situation: Throw a tantrum in class today and hurled a chair at my face. He was in violation as a result but I was mad as a cross.

My occasionally apathetic treatment drove him to say viciously, "Hindi ka na, hindi kasi, hindi pa rin!" before sobbing his heart out. He was referring to the second of the story I just read to them today. It was titled "How do I love thee, let me count the ways."

To Ateneo Core and Ateneo Deli Pleats, don't put me to a test like this.

March 14, 2004

We got my class to follow me, I tap their guilt factor. I'd tell them classes will soon be over and we need to cover good memories for those bad ones to our hot days together. I thought the most sentimental responses I got from them were just pouched looks and incurious silence.

Today though I was surprised to see Girl's eyes swollen from tears. He told me the reason, "Ms. Issa... spoke that we have no long recess, vacation... Apo-calypse..." he whined, tears welling up once more. His guardians and I had a good laugh together.

May 7, 2004

I miss my kids. I never thought I'd miss them this much. The food they let me ate taste dazing breaks. On laughter that filled our classroom everyday, the way they intentionally called me "teacher" instead of teachers.

Sigh. I know when they additionally outgrow by that. They loved me too.

Love's sacrifices

By Arnee S. Salazar

It was another Friday afternoon. As I got home from school at 7:30, in the morning, my father was already there making dinner. He was bonding in the kitchen, cooking rice and cooking another delicious meal.

My dad's dishes are always yummy to the very taste, but recently I have noticed that he makes Fridays' meals always extra special. The smell of deliciously baked chicken was already filling the senses.

I greeted him and went to my room just to change my clothes and put my bag down. After that, I went out to see my mother to bonding the house. He was already halfway the sliced dusting the benches, as I went to get the broom and started sweeping. In the comfortable silence, we finished our chores.

The table was the routine in our house every Friday ever since my mom got promoted and had to work five days a week away from our home. Five years have gone by since that day she told us the news. I was 10 and my brother was 13 when her office promoted her and assigned her to a place outside of our town.

She said we didn't have any choice. We couldn't live on our own. We don't function alone and the rotten her sweet son, so we just had to accept it. She would leave for work early Monday or late Sunday and would be back home by Friday.

"Good, weary baby," she said. "I'll go home every week. Nothing is gonna change."

But I was worried. What if things didn't change? What if she let go of me or what if she had an accident on the road? Oh, why did she have to be so far away? So many questions were raising in my head. I was so confused. I just knew I was going to miss my mother so much. But I also knew that what she said was true. We just had to take it for what it was.

Far but near

As time went by, we began to adjust to our new situation. When teachers said our night, things didn't seem so bad. Soon, she was not there physically all the time, but she was still very much involved in our household.

She would call on the phone always to check on us or to let me "hi" and I know a little that she was still there for me and my brother when we needed a mother to make our will strong and to inspire us. And our pranks and naughtiness still didn't go unnoticed. We still got scolded for our misdemeanors even if she was hundreds of miles away.

When the 10 p.m. curfew sounded, my dad dropped everything he was doing and got the car keys. It was time to fetch my mom in the bus station. Just another hour and a half till we see her again. Our house was never as clean as it could ever be, and I know my mother would approve. I went to take a shower.

The arrival shortly afterward. Time was ticking, and I knew the weekend would be fun. We wanted to savor every moment of togetherness. Saturdays were always spent visiting family, going out on the mall together or just plain hanging out at home. As much as possible, I avoided going out with friends on weekends.

Whenever she's home, she would still cook our favorite meals every day. We would say she didn't have to do that and that we'll just do it for her, but she has insisted, saying it made her happy doing those things for her family.

Sunday came too soon. I was in bed early, as I still had to wake up at the next day. At 11:30 p.m., I woke up with my mom at my side kissing my cheek. It was time again for her to leave.

I kissed her back on the cheek. "I love you, baby" she said. "I love you too, mom. Take care." And she was gone.

A lady named Leidy

By Ruth L. Manera

Two girls pay tribute to a friend who played mother hen in their college life

When her classmates compliments were many. Leidy could give. Adrian Blank a run for his money. But she made no college life in UST memorable. Shared a total of 36 entries of Leidy's adventures and misadventures in my online diary alone, proof of how the information are.

Here are some of the moments I shared with the girl whom we finally call "Control Freak."

Feb. 17, 2003

Leidy, the student lost, prepared a list of things that we should bring to our retreat.

I was happy to play along with her list... Unfortunately, I realized that she never overboard with us since! Good, man... what am I going to do with those shirts for the next three days? At least, I only wear one shirt a day and a pair of panties a night. And that's it.

Feb. 19, 2003

Leidy is a perfect example of what could happen if the characters in the PC RPG game "The Sims" would suddenly come alive.

During our three-day retreat, we let her have our CDs. She begged her to help us unpack. After did, and after did it totally.

We knew those signs of proud housewives who run their fingers on top of a shiny table to check for dust? Well, she could easily be one of those.

She automatically cleaned after us, lecturing us about the advantages of proper hygiene.

May 9, 2003

Being stuck between two rowing tracks in an extremely narrow street in Port does not exactly qualify the most ideal situation you could find yourself in especially if you're already running late for a very important appointment. But that was where Leidy and I found ourselves in after several attempts at finding short-cuts.

I was drifting uncomfortably in my seat for the last 15 minutes, thinking that with every minute we lost, our dream job was slipping away.

So, Leidy wanting to play the hero, got out of the car, intermittently walked toward the driving train drivers and won her those my cause for a few minutes. I was startled out of my head when she came back with a satisfied smile on her face.

A few seconds later, the traffic was moving, and we were free again.

To the question of what she said to the drivers as she left to pass, she just shrugged her shoulders and answered, "I gave them a piece of my mind."

She cracked the whip—and how!

By Pam Pamor

IT wouldn't be a stretch if I said that I couldn't have graduated if not for Leidy.

It was my second attempt at college. I finished Political Science exactly a week before finals during my junior year. After a year, I returned to UST, determined to get my Journalism degree, determined to get school over and done with.

It wasn't going to be easy. I knew her with my laughter, my jobs and a rebellious streak. But Leidy was all I needed to keep things in check.

She was younger than me but she acted like she was my mom.

And there it didn't just do that for me—she did that for all our friends.

She woke us up for early morning classes which I loathed. She handed us little notes reminding us of things we needed to do. Before class, she would check if we all had our papers ready. If ever we commented on someone new or started another relationship, she gave us either long talks or the evil eye.

And if something bad happened to any of us, she blamed herself.

Whenever friends left the brakes or a very important stretch of road and asked for votes if she should go straight to our university or turn right so we could drink class and go to the mall, Leidy insisted under a cautionary hand, giving us a lecture on the importance of academics.

After a while, we started calling her our human Gabay.

Leidy had to endure a lot of sibling from us. We teased her all the time. ...less than was just our way of showing how much we adored her.

Our college days have been over for more than a year now and before me, my life is not the same without her convenient interaction.

She's going to be a great mom someday. I should know—she was once to her.

Unlike mother, unlike daughter

By Andrea C. Perez

We have nothing in common—physically and otherwise—except for the books which is a good thing. But hey, you made me more eager depositions in highly sensitive and emotional people who don't let go of small that easily. So it is past love, a major misunderstanding, an empty purchase bottle, or a broken accessory.

People accuse you of being different; you smoke, get involved with one, or—God must, she did some stuff I'd rather not mention. Maybe you're just being indifferent—but not to me, never—to me.

It's not as if you go around looking for trouble like some middle-aged teenager. No, it's probably that people found you too cool. While other girls begin for curfews, you simply told me to inform you where I was, who I was with, what time I'd be back. Overnights have been no problem since high school. You never pressured me academically and I delivered when I could. You know how good fun sucks up time.

Falling-out

The thing is, I'm afraid you sometime raised a easily spoiled brat. I was the classic only child: self-aware, cuddly all peaches and cream—the kind that doesn't usually survive in any place out. A falling-out was necessary to let us both grow.

We can't deny that something snapped way back that is beyond repair. It was torn angst coupled with a loud dad for me, and, I guess, a midlife crisis on your part. There was a time when we didn't have a decent conversation for a month, but we're too old for that now. We've archived those times at the back of our minds and labeled them "drama queen moments."

Ours is not a standard mom-daughter relationship. We're sisters. I'm called "mataray." You take things lightly. I have a tendency to be cynical. You cry while watching soaps. I laugh at them. You appreciate things "make" while I don't think there's any good in Evap. I think I have become a Jhett-would puppy.

It's a rather odd setup, you know. I call you "she" in spite of you being my biological mom. Her rough explanation that I lived with too many cousins sounds lame.

And I hope you could clarify some sub-branches of our family tree, especially on the father side, if you happen to know about them. Only last year I knew of a sister on your side, and that was a relief of some sort. But please, will soon be over and we need to cover good memories for those bad ones to our hot days together. I thought the most sentimental responses I got from them were just pouched looks and incurious of silence.

Today though I was surprised to see Girl's eyes swollen from tears. He told me the reason, "Ms. Issa... spoke that we have no long recess, vacation... Apo-calypse..." he whined, tears welling up once more. His guardians and I had a good laugh together.

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THE TIU family. Spot Mommy Lianne.

Our living saint: Mommy Lianne

By Cheryl Tiu, 20-3 Correspondent
and Chris Tiu

At the two oldest of the children, we want to share the story of the one reason who makes the world to us. She's tall, very fashionable and absolutely stunning—and people often mistake her for our older sister. She is our Mommy Lianne.

Mommy Lianne is our living saint. She never fails to attend mass, visits the Blessed Sacrament and pray the rosary everyday. She personally reminds us—even our household help—to go to confession. She don't know anyone who's more concerned about our—and everyone else's—moral values.

She is selfless. We often play tug-of-war in seeking her attention, and mom never fails to satisfy every single one of us.

She listens to our stories, is always present. If Chris and Charles have basketball games and makes it a point to cut out Cheryl's articles. She plays scrabble, Playstation, and badminton with the youngsters, despite her busy schedule.

If she's doing something important ...and one of us distracts her or interrupts her with an exciting story, she never ignores us with an "Excuse" line. She would patiently put down her pen or receiver but prepares to hear us out.

If someone comes home late for dinner, she drops what she's doing to join the latecomer at the table.

She never has anything bad to say about any of us; she's always been our number one fan. She always underlines our talents and pushes us to hone them. She's full of praises for our achievements and we know that she is proud of all of us.

She makes practical decisions, counting that her head reigns over her heart. She is also the epitome of simplicity; she never asks for anything and would opt for nonother luxury any day.

This Mother's Day we want to let the best mom in the world know that none of us would be where we are now without her. She's our treasure, our angel, our pride and our glory. And we want her to know that we are her biggest fans.